

The Atlantic

NIELSEN'S NEWEST PEOPLE METER/MARKET VALUES AND MEDICAL ETHICS

JIHAD VS. MCWORLD

*How the planet is both falling apart and coming together—
and what this means for democracy*



BY
BENJAMIN R.
BARBER

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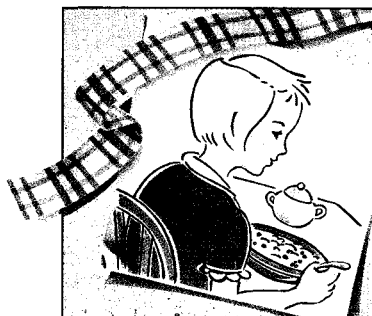
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The world is caught between two opposing tendencies. One, "Jihad," is the planet's growing fragmentation along tribal and sectarian lines. The other, "McWorld," is the planet's growing electronic, commercial, and cultural integration. Neither tendency, the author writes, is benign.

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745 BOYLSTON STREET



ONE FEATURE OF THIS issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* is the selection of poems called "The Seasons," which begins on page 81. Compiling such anthologies, and choosing *The Atlantic's* poetry as a whole, is the work of the poetry editor, Peter Davison. Davison has been a member of the *Atlantic* family since 1956, when, after several jobs in publishing in New York and Cambridge, he joined the staff of the Atlantic Monthly Press, for many years the company's book-publishing operation, of which he would eventually become the executive editor and director. Though born in the East, Davison was raised in the West—in Boulder, Colorado, where his father, the English poet Edward Davison, taught at the university. The Davison home was a way-stop for traveling writers and musicians. Robert Penn Warren and Robert Frost were family friends and frequent visitors, and the atmosphere at home, Davison recalls, "fairly reeked of poetry, a fragrance as strong as that of my father's cigars." Davison's first collection of poems, *The Breaking of the Day*, won the Yale Series of Younger Poets competition in 1963. Since then he has published eight other books of poetry.



THOMAS VICTOR

Asked once to evaluate his work as both an editor and a poet, Davison made relativity the soul of wit and composed this epitaph: "He was a better editor than other poets, and a better poet than other editors." In truth, both careers have been distinguished. Davison left the Atlantic Monthly Press in 1985 to establish his own imprint, Peter Davison Books, at Houghton Mifflin. Last year saw three of his books reach the *New York Times* best-seller list: *The Spiritual Life of Children*, by Robert Coles; *Anne Sexton: A Biography*, by Diane Wood Middlebrook; and *Prairie-Erth*, by William Least Heat-Moon.

Davison spends one afternoon a week at the *Atlantic* offices, reading the poems that have survived a screening by Steven Cramer, the assistant poetry editor (who is also a poet). His rich voice can be heard in conversation from a considerable distance, sometimes rising slightly to persist above an interruption, like an armored vehicle easing across a fallen log. Bits of quoted verse trail after him. But the words are unmistakably Davison's own when he gazes levelly over his half-glasses and asks someone who ought to know: "How many poets do we have in this issue?"

—THE EDITORS

CONTRIBUTORS

BENJAMIN R. BARBER ("Jihad Vs. McWorld") is the Whitman Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University. Barber's most recent books are *Strong Democracy* (1984) and *The Conquest of Politics* (1988).

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ALICIA OSTRIKER ("Locker-Room Conversation") is a poet and literary critic. Her most recent book of poems, *Green Age*, was published in 1989. Her forthcoming critical work, *Unwritten Volume: Rethinking the Bible*, will be published this year.

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MARLY SWICK ("The Other Widow") teaches creative writing at the University of Nebraska. Her collection of short stories, *A Hole in the Language* (1990), will be published in paperback this fall under the title *Monogamy*.

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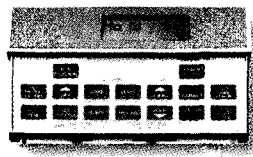
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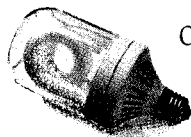
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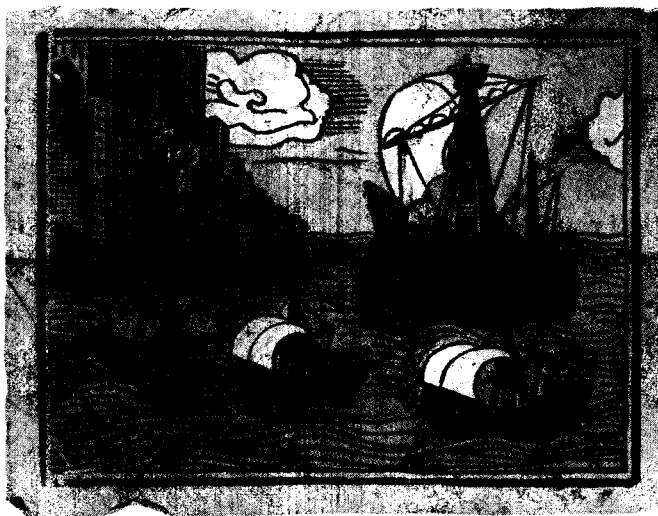
Nationwide
through October 12

The Quincentenary—the biggest bash since the Bicentennial—commenced last Columbus Day, when authentic replicas of the Niña, Pinta, and Santa María left Spain for the New World, following the route Columbus is thought to have taken. The caravels will tour 21 cities by year's end; the festivities will continue until the 500th anniversary of the explorer's arrival. Between now and then, more than 100 cities and towns will host a range of events—from the largest tall-ships assemblage in modern history, in New York City on July 4th, to America's first international floral exposition, in Columbus, Ohio, to the Festival of the Americas in Corpus Christi. And ongoing exhibitions, lectures, and conferences will take advantage of the quincentennial by showing Columbus's legacy in fields as diverse as medicine, music, and clothing. For more information, or to find out about activities in your area: Christopher Columbus Quincentenary Jubilee Commission, 1801 F St., NW, Washington, DC 20006; (202) 632-1992.

ELLIS ISLAND CENTENNIAL

New York, New York
through December 31

One hundred years ago Ellis Island replaced Castle Garden and the Barge Office as the greeting point for America's newest citizens. Ellis Island received more than 12 million future Americans in the Great Hall before the facility was closed, in 1954. With a three-story museum chronicling the immigrants' treacherous journey and arrival in their



new country and the American Immigrant Wall of Honor listing nearly 200,000 names (the longest wall of names in the world), the newly restored Ellis Island National Monument shines a bright light on those whose first sight of America was the neighboring Statue of Liberty. The museum is open year-round. For more information: Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island, Liberty Island, New York, NY 10004; (212) 363-3200.

CELEBRATING THE FIRST AMERICANS

Tahlequah, Oklahoma
March 7-14

Early this month nearly 4,000 people will attend a weeklong celebration in honor of Oklahoma's Year of the Indian. Visitors, whether they examine Seminole patchwork, watch a traditional Creek ceremonial stomp dance, or listen to the retelling of ritual legends and tales, can discover the authentic culture of the "first Americans." The days will also be filled with lectures and presentations by the president of the Navajo nation, an Ojibway holy man who is also a Catholic priest, a

representative of the Native American Rights Fund, and others. For more information: Center for Tribal Studies, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, OK 74464; (918) 456-5511, ext. 4350.

BATTLE OF LEXINGTON

Lexington, Massachusetts
April 20

The battle of Lexington, begun by the legendary "shot heard 'round the world," will be re-enacted on the Lexington Green at 6 A.M. by modern-day Minutemen and Redcoats. The day's events, all free, include a parade, a memorial service, and a visit by "Paul Revere." Lexington's Museum of Our National Heritage invites visitors year-round to examine the causes and effects of this first battle in the War of Independence. The town has also maintained a number of historical buildings from the Colonial period, including the Buckman Tavern, built in 1710, where the Minutemen awaited news of the British Army. For more information: Lexington Chamber of Commerce, 1875 Massachusetts Ave., Lexington, MA 02173; (617) 862-1450.

FORT SEWARD WAGON TRAIN

Jamestown, North Dakota
June 20-27

When the red-eye was not a viable option for crossing the vast distances of the American West, wagon trains rolled across the prairie in an unceasing line. For their twenty-first traditional wagon-train re-enactment, the nonprofit organizers are planning a voyage to the small North Dakota town of Kulm, celebrating its 100th year. To preserve authenticity, participants are required to adopt proper period clothing, forsake modern conveniences, and share chores with members of the community. The week-long journey is highlighted by stops at local historical sites, and each day is brought to a close within the securing confines of the encircled wagons with an evening of stories, songs, and crafts around the campfire. For more information: Fort Seward, Inc., Box 244, Jamestown, ND 58402; (701) 252-6844 (evenings).

CIVIL WAR HERITAGE DAYS

Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
June 27-July 5

Crowds gather annually in Gettysburg to relive the greatest battle ever fought on the North American continent. As dusk falls on July 4 some 2,000 authentically garmented soldiers, antique Springfield-Enfield rifles at the ready, will contest East Cemetery Hill once again. Heritage Days events also include a collectors' show and visits to period field camps and garrisons. For re-enactment tickets: (717) 334-6245. For more information on all events: Gettysburg Travel Council, 35 Carlisle St., Gettysburg, PA 17325; (717) 334-6274.



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



POW/MIA MYTH

As a former prisoner of war in Vietnam and one who has considerable personal knowledge of the POW/MIA issue, I was shocked by the disturbing and unbalanced slant of H. Bruce Franklin's article "The POW/MIA Myth" (December *Atlantic*). I found Franklin's effort a tired and transparent attempt to rationalize the American public's eventual rejection of the anti-war/America-bashing culture by blaming the POW/MIA movement and its powerful "orchestrators."

What I find most bewildering and careless is Franklin's failure to approach and interview anyone involved in the issue for comments, background, or personal experiences—as any competent journalist would when preparing a twenty-one-page cover story for a prominent national magazine. Franklin obviously never ventured outside his local library and video store to research this issue. I think that sheds some light on the limited scope and depth of his research.

Franklin misses the crux of the issue entirely. The issue is a matter of policy and principle; the American people give priority over all else to accounting for their missing from the battlefield. It's that simple. Yet, heedlessly, Franklin claims that a dozen or two U.S. servicemen—even if they are still alive—are expendable and that their abandonment pales in comparison with Vietnamese losses. Although he succeeds in deftly illustrating his disdain for America and its ideals, Franklin fails to recognize why the POW/MIA issue actually does have a life of its own.

Sadly, in what should have been a scholarly attempt to find the truth, Franklin not only failed to add substantively to the debate but also exposed his bias and agenda.

EUGENE B. MCDANIEL
President
American Defense Institute
Alexandria, Va.

I congratulate you for having the courage to publish H. Bruce Franklin's "The POW/MIA Myth." It is brilliant, one of the half-dozen best things I have read on Vietnam, ranking alongside Neil Sheehan's *A Bright Shining Lie*. I am certain you will hear from the POW/MIA activists. From my dealings with them here in Peoria, I have learned that they tend to be zealous and quite pugnacious.

My only criticism of Franklin's article is the omission of one overwhelming reason (something he might cover in the book) why so many lost airmen were carried as MIA: *their paychecks kept coming to their families if they were listed as MIA*. Pay and benefits were reduced for survivors once an official finding of KIA was made. So, put simply, if no body was recovered, the military (at the squadron level) quietly conspired to inflate the MIA total, primarily as a form of welfare for the dead pilots' families.

As a former Navy pilot, I can attest that this kind of sub rosa activity was common. Pilots were supposed to tell their wives about this dodge so they would know that an MIA listing meant that in all probability they were dead, and the wife should therefore get on with her life. Unfortunately, many pilots, afflicted with the congenial self-confidence that is the hallmark of the breed ("It always happens to somebody else"), never got around to telling their wives what MIA-BNR ("body not recovered") *really* meant.

GEORGE E. HOPKINS
Peoria, Ill.

I cannot believe that anyone would consider the POW/MIA issue a "myth" created by the government. I can understand how someone might not believe that there are still Americans alive in Southeast Asia. I myself did not believe it until three years ago. The more I researched, the more convinced I became that there were still POW/MIAs in Southeast Asia.



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I joined VIVA during the summer of 1968, while stationed in Yuma, Arizona, with the U.S. Marine Corps. I remember the claims made in 1973 that there were no more Americans in Vietnam. I also remember when Marine PFC Bobby Garwood came out from Vietnam in 1979 and was railroaded as a deserter.

I am amazed that someone would raise the tired old clichés of U.S. military personnel in Vietnam as mass murderers and baby killers and use the anti-war show trials as evidence. The author repeats the story of the execution of a manacled Viet Cong prisoner by the Saigon police chief without mentioning that the prisoner had shortly before executed the chief's wife and daughters.

The U.S. government is truly fostering the suspicion that POW/MIAs are still alive in Southeast Asia by mishandling reports and refusing to release information. It will be interesting to see what the Senate Select Committee finds during its investigation of government handling of this issue.

GLENN PORTWOOD
*Vice President
Macon County VietNow
Decatur, Ill.*

The careful nurturing of the POW/MIA "issue" was intertwined with the creation of another falsehood: the image of the GI-hating anti-war activist. As one who demonstrated against the war in junior high school and who has known many others, younger and older, who opposed the war, I have yet to meet anyone who spat on a vet or asked a returned veteran how many babies he killed. If such people really existed, they had to be a tiny minority of the anti-war population. Yet, along with the story of the POW/MIAs, this "hostile treatment" of vets has become a commonplace piece of accepted pseudohistory (to borrow Franklin's expression).

I hope Franklin's article gets read and discussed in college and high school classrooms across this country.

MARK CHALKLEY
Morgantown, W.V.

During two years as a Peace Corps volunteer stationed near the Thai-Lao border, and more than four years as a supervisor in a processing center for Indochinese refugees in the Philip-

pinas, I met and talked with thousands of refugees from all parts of Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. Not one of them had ever seen or heard of living U.S. prisoners of war in Indochina. While we can never be certain that all combatants have returned from any conflict, there is no reason to believe in the existence of prison camps in the Laotian jungles.

The POW-rescue movies that H. Bruce Franklin has analyzed are paranoid fantasies on the order of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. This cynical, racist manipulation of the U.S. public by Hollywood and Washington has helped to perpetuate the economic and diplomatic isolation of Vietnam. Although the current Vietnamese government is a bad government by any measure, some part of the continuing suffering in that country and the resulting refugee problem is a consequence of our refusal to put our lost war behind us and establish normal relations.

CARL L. BANKSTON III
Baton Rouge, La.

A reader of "The POW/MIA Myth" might be moved to question Professor Franklin's assertion that "the story of the heroic American prisoners abandoned in Southeast Asia could not become a major American myth until the dream factory geared up its assembly line for mass production of the essential images."

In support of Franklin's observations about the sheer numbers of recurring visual and fictive images, I wish to state unequivocally that, if anything, Franklin scrupulously *understates* the extent to which these manufactured POW/MIA images permeate the ambient electronic ethers of daily U.S. popular culture (revisionist and otherwise). For those readers willing to look, the specific evidence that verifies Franklin's research is positively antic, almost lurid in its abundance. For example, when Franklin arrived here late in June of last year, to conduct some of his final research on the mythopoeic nature of the Vietnam War, he was met with no fewer than *forty* commercially released films that present vivid POW/MIA images as major plot elements or in significant character development or in some ideological narrative form. By November that number had grown to fifty. More preposterous still, most of these

fifty films have been procured in something well shy of a decade!

Given the controversial nature of Franklin's stance, it is certain that his assumptions will be sternly interrogated. Unassailable, however, is the evidentiary truth that underpins his description of the extent to which the POW/MIA image permeates certain sectors of this nation's psyche.

JOHN S. BAKY
*La Salle University
Philadelphia, Pa.*

"The POW/MIA Myth" was the worst researched and written article I have ever read. The author presents arguable theories as fact (for example, removing men from his "real POW count" because Hanoi says they died in captivity), wildly exaggerates others (stating that hundreds of thousands of people were executed by the South Vietnamese government for political resistance in only a few years), and leaves out the most important incident to occur in the eighteen-year POW issue: Bobby Garwood. In the twenty-one-page article there is no mention of Bobby Garwood, the POW who was returned to the United States from Vietnam in 1979. On top of that omission, the author suggests that "there has yet to be any credible evidence that any prisoners were withheld in Indochina."

BILL ADAMEC
Enfield, Conn.

By keeping false hopes alive, the Bush Administration is showing if not a cruel streak then a lamentable lack of sensitivity toward the families of the MIAs. By extending the period of grief, which doesn't allow families to bury their dead even symbolically, as well as encouraging POW/MIA con artists to suck money from these people, federal and state governments are practicing what must be described as mental cruelty.

LARRY SHAPIRO
Calgary, Alberta

Your story on the POW/MIA myth confuses three separate issues:

1. The ongoing captivity of Americans in Southeast Asia—for which, as the author reconfirms, there is neither persuasive evidence nor even a likely-sounding rationale.

2. Foot-dragging by the communist



regimes in returning the remains of dead Americans. Though hard evidence for this is also sparse, one can at least imagine a plausible motivation: no government would rush to return for autopsy the bodies of enemy prisoners it had tortured or starved to death.

3. Communist abuse of U.S. prisoners of war—which is simply a fact, although the author never admits it.

In fact, the author can't bring himself to utter even the most pro forma criticism of the communist regimes of Southeast Asia. His main motivation seems to be to defend the ideological and moral certainties of his youth against the "revisionist" theory that the Americans weren't the root of all evil in Southeast Asia. Thus it's not surprising that he never entertains the possibility that his central thesis (that the White House and Hollywood, those twin right-wing redoubts, conspired to fool the American public into believing that Americans are still held prisoner in order to warp the image of the Vietnam War) may be exactly backward. Rather than concoct the fantasy, politicians and moviemakers appear to have merely responded to the public's pre-existing will to believe. The POW/MIA myth is a genuinely populist delusion. Perhaps the author will next expose the right-wing plot behind Elvis sightings.

STEVE SAILER
Chicago, Ill.

Please cancel my subscription. H. Bruce Franklin has helpfully rekindled my rage from the Vietnam years.

DAVID A. C. RUDLOFF, M.D.
Melbourne, Fla.

I suspect that "The POW/MIA Myth" is going to get you in big trouble. I don't remember when I began to suspect that the POW business was bogus, but I knew from the start that the Nixon homecoming show was cynical and vicious. As a Vietnam vet myself (Qui Nhon, 1968), I applaud the great courage shown by H. Bruce Franklin and by your magazine, and sincerely hope you escape with your hides.

DANIEL J. MARLIN
Santa Rosa, Calif.

As the chairman of Vietnam Veterans of America's National Committee on Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), I know something about

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those Vietnam veterans who are exploited by the POW/MIA myth. H. Bruce Franklin has so well documented. I know something about the holes in their souls and their need to find identity and meaning. The irony is that they have been so traumatized by their war experience that they themselves continue to be held hostage by it. The large number of veterans obsessed with POW/MIA is in itself testimony to the need for psychological closure on this issue.

It's tragic that while politicians and Hollywood have fanned the flames of traumatization in these veterans, problems about which something could be done have been ignored. Congressionally mandated studies reveal that more than 800,000 Vietnam vets suffer from significant to severe PTSD, and more than 100,000 are believed to be homeless. Our prisons are filled with Vietnam vets whose incarceration is a direct result of their war experience.

Little or nothing is being done to realistically address these problems. In the meantime, we are told that the POW/MIA issue is a humanitarian one, and perhaps this is the cruelest irony of all. It was in the name of freedom for humanity that the U.S. government spent \$170 billion and 60,000 American lives. Now, twenty years later, this Administration continues to manipulate the unfinished emotional business of veterans and citizens alike by dragging out POW/MIA and thereby blocking diplomatic relations with Vietnam. The ultimate result is continued economic devastation for Vietnam and ongoing untold suffering for the people we once professed to care so much about.

STEVEN J. BENTLEY
Scarborough, Me.

H. Bruce Franklin replies:

Exposing a myth believed by millions can arouse impassioned attacks on one's arguments, evidence, and even motives. Such assaults on my article, however, have failed to discover a single incorrect fact or logical error. The only substantive objections—that I don't deal with certain issues or sources—concern matters discussed in my book *M.I.A. or Mythmaking In America*.

For example, the Garwood case is alleged to be my most serious omission; it is cited by Glenn Portwood and by Bill Adamec, who calls it "the most im-

portant incident to occur in the eighteen-year POW issue." My book has an entire section on Garwood—the only POW that the 1976 Montgomery report considered might be alive, and the only POW or MIA who has in fact turned out to be alive.

One point needs clarification: Adamec's misunderstanding of the "hundreds of thousands" of victims of Diem's regime. My list, documented in the book, includes those imprisoned (as many as 800,000) and tortured (as many as 600,000); the total of those executed was at most 90,000.

Some of my critics impugn my motives. Seeking to exonerate the White House from responsibility for engendering the POW/MIA myth, and relying on his own caricature of all those who opposed the Vietnam War as youthful zealots, Steve Sailer thinks my "main motivation" is to defend "the ideological and moral certainties" of my "youth." In fact my youthful faith embraced the White House but was undermined by my participation—as a Strategic Air Command navigator and squadron intelligence officer—in elaborate deceptions of the American people during the 1950s. The evidence that the POW/MIA myth, another elaborate deception, originated in the White House is presented at length in my book.

Eugene McDaniel, whose own role in fostering the myth is well documented in Ethan Seidman's "The POW/MIA Lobby" (December *Atlantic*), does get to what he aptly calls the crux of the issue. Contrary to his characteristic misrepresentation, I did not state or imply that any live American POWs are "expendable." What I did assert is that a focus on the fate of the imagined POWs, for whose existence there has yet to be a shred of credible evidence, and who could not ever have numbered more than a few dozen, obscures the catastrophic effects of the war on both Vietnam and the United States, where many tens of thousands of live Vietnam veterans are now homeless or incarcerated as actual prisoners in our own country. The suffering that directly results is eloquently described by Steven Bentley. When McDaniel states that we "give priority over all else to accounting for [our] missing from the battlefield," he succinctly articulates the tragic pathology of the POW/MIA fantasy.

THE EDUCATION CRISIS

I thought I had picked up a ten-year-old issue of *The Atlantic* when I read Daniel J. Singal's article "The Other Crisis in American Education" (November *Atlantic*), which rehashes tired arguments about the problems of public education in America and offers simplistic solutions.

Singal never explores one possible explanation for some of what he sees: that students at expensive private colleges are no longer the best students in America, because the best students are going elsewhere to college. As the demographics for students taking the SAT have changed, so has the profile of the top students. Today elite, private liberal-arts colleges may see fewer of these top students, who for economic and other reasons are spread throughout the nation, many at public universities and junior colleges. Harvard and Hobart and William Smith Colleges simply aren't a choice for many of today's top students.

I am sick and tired of wholesale assaults on American schools. Such diatribes are in themselves a problem: they leave excellent teachers demoralized, they fail to support promising practices, they do not pinpoint problems precisely enough, and they suggest too-simple solutions that simply don't work. Educators are not so stupid that they have overlooked the obvious these past ten years. Singal insults the entire teaching profession by suggesting that his four simple solutions are all it will take to reform American schools.

Though a historian, Singal takes particular notice of English-teaching. The problems with language cannot all be laid at the door of the English classroom; a thoughtful literacy is the product of the kinds of experiences children have starting in grade one or even earlier, and it is the sum of all their class experiences. If reading, discussion, and extended writing are not the norm in science, math, history, and other classes, no level of excellence in English-teaching can make up the difference.

I have no desire to defend schools from legitimate criticism, or to ignore promising plans to improve schools. But Singal's solutions are astonishingly off the mark. From my own experience and research, I know of no schools that sacrifice academic excellence for social



equity. I know of a lot of schools that struggle to meet both those goals. This is *the* struggle of contemporary schools. What they are attempting to do is redefine academic excellence in the context of teaching all students, not just those who are in a traditional academic mold.

The old high school of memory, circa 1960, graduated only about half its students—those who were “academically inclined” in a traditional way: on the whole, those who had a lifetime of literacy behind them and who read extensively on their own, who could learn from lecture and recitation, who did not have to work after school, and whose families thought that academic work was important.

Today’s schools include all those students who in the 1960s left school precisely when it became more academic—in the senior high grades. These are students without the traditional motivation for doing academic work; they may also be students who do not learn best through passive means like lecture and demonstration, or those who are too physically active to bear the punishment of long, inactive days, or those who are not primarily verbal learners. However, many of these are students who have extraordinary intelligence, promise, and potential. Today teachers have learned much about multiple intelligence, about different learning modes and styles, and they are trying to put that knowledge to work as they reshape the curriculum of the 1960s to make it work for today’s students.

Singal’s untrained teacher won’t know anything about this, won’t have any understanding of how students un-

like him or her can best learn. Education courses today often are not “Mickey Mouse,” as Singal calls them, but serious and important courses in which academically trained students learn how to make the transition from what they know about their fields to how various students might best learn the subject. This is the major bridge between being a student and being a teacher. The teachers I am willing to criticize are the ones who haven’t crossed it. Has Singal?

The other solutions Singal proposes

his students should have—not expect other teachers across the country to do it for him. If a survey course is needed, let him teach it.

2. He should find out if his students were offered the chance to take AP or other advanced courses but elected not to do so.

3. At his own college he should communicate his standards and expectations, so that his school does not admit those who have not read widely. And he should publish the expectations in college brochures, so that high school students across America get the message about how to prepare for his college.

4. He should commit himself to encouraging his best and brightest students to enter the public school teaching profession for at least a portion of their adult lives, without demeaning what the best education courses can offer a prospective teacher.

5. He should spend a week in the classroom of a strong, experienced teacher in his community, and he should spend at least a day following in the footsteps of an “academic” student. In particular, he should involve himself in the high

school curriculum for and teacher training in his own field, history.

DRIEK ZIRINSKY
Professor of English
Boise State University
Boise, Idaho

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are the norm in the schools I know well. Teachers are free to shape curriculum, often freer than they know. In fact, Singal’s call for a return to a standard curriculum of required and survey courses is exactly the sort of control he wants his bright young teachers to be free of. Advanced and AP courses are available for students to select.

If Singal wants to have a national voice on education issues, let me close with some propositions for him.

1. In his own teaching he should provide the kind of education he thinks

Although I attend what Daniel J. Singal describes as the ideal school, and although my school’s Scholastic Aptitude Test scores should still be high, I believe that colleges place too much emphasis on the SAT. For those of us planning to attend col-



lege, the SAT brings much stress. Many of my peers (I am a high school junior) work hard to raise their scores, merely from the results of the PSAT, in order to attend a top-notch school. Administrators agree that the stress over the SAT takes away from schoolwork, and that schoolwork is much more important than one test.

A 1987 *Newsweek* article said that “nearly 75 percent of all four-year colleges require the SAT, but most admissions officers say it is only one criterion—and hardly the most important.” If it is truly not the most important criterion, then why does the test cause so much unhappiness in young people today? Maybe the SAT is no longer the most accurate measuring device, and the drop in scores should not be directly related to the declining quality of our education. SAT scores are a brand for life, and a curse for those whose scores are low. So save the minds of high-schoolers and help us keep our sanity by fixing the SAT!

MOLLY NOWOTNY
St. Louis, Mo.

Daniel J. Singal is right about his fourth “remedy”—“Attract more bright college graduates into the teaching profession”—but wrong about exempting them from all formal professional training. It is true that able and idealistic college graduates can go into classrooms full of able and highly motivated children (disproportionately to be found among the elite private schools that Singal mentions) and, with the friendly mentoring of experienced teachers, do well. But it is exceedingly rare that newly fledged, pedagogically innocent BA holders, however bright, can go into typical American classrooms, whether in inner cities, suburbs, or rural communities, and bring about meaningful learning. The bright and dedicated college graduates who enter teaching without understanding how to transform subject matter into lessons learnable by students vastly different from themselves rarely persist to become professionals; they leave teaching at the first opportunity and get into easier work. And they blame the students for their failure as teachers.

HUGH G. PETRIE
Dean, Graduate School of Education
State University of New York
Buffalo, N.Y.

My high school recently removed a number of ability-grouped classes from the curriculum. Although the move presumably aims at equity, it does not aim at excellence. At least for the college-bound, it is distressing to realize that our achievement is mediocre by comparison with that of students twenty years ago.

Today’s curriculum, in most schools, is saturated with the popular self-esteem movement. Every student has heard its “feel-good-about-yourself” slogan. But no matter how smart we are or how hard we try, it says to us that it’s okay to be dumb and not try. The real meaning of the movement’s slogan is best put by Bart Simpson: “Underachiever and Proud of It.”

The biggest problem in American education is the lack of quantity and quality in reading assignments. In my eighth-grade English class a book called *Secrets of the Shopping Mall* was assigned; only two other books were assigned during the entire year. I glanced at *Secrets of the Shopping Mall* but read *The Great Gatsby* instead.

SCOTT LARSON
Ninth Grade
Hoquiam, Wash.

A simple but graphic example to elucidate Daniel J. Singal’s point concerning the decline of America’s best students: My daughter (class of 1987) and I (class of 1965) obtained identical SAT scores. My daughter was a National Merit Scholarship winner; I was a Commended Student.

INA GRAVITZ
Lake Grove, N.Y.

As a professor of mathematics at the University of California, which admits only the top 12.5 percent of California high school students, I can echo Daniel Singal’s concern about the lack of preparation in our best students. As a parent of two high school students, I can see evidence in my own highly regarded school district of “the bias against excellence” that he identifies as the problem. I wrote a letter to our local paper expressing concern about the district’s elimination of honors classes and citing the *Atlantic* article for support. Though I carefully worded the letter to deflect charges of elitism, the response was an intemperate letter from the head of the PTA accusing me of believing that “students with non-

high-achieving grades are not worth nurturing” and contrasting that with the PTA “philosophy” of equal educational opportunity. It’s clear that too many of our school leaders cannot see that equal opportunity and the encouragement of excellence need not be in conflict.

PAUL C. EKLOF
Costa Mesa, Calif.

Daniel J. Singal replies:

Driek Zirinsky’s contention that “the best students” have shifted from private liberal-arts colleges to public universities won’t hold up under scrutiny. It’s true that the economic downturn of the past few years has affected the number of applicants to private colleges, but throughout the 1980s those schools were doing a land-office business in admissions.

Perhaps Boise State is a notable exception to the national trend, but colleagues at other public universities around the country tell me that the reading and writing skills of their entering students are dreadful. Moreover, those public universities that require the SAT have in most cases experienced the same drop in average freshman scores that private colleges have. In Professor Zirinsky’s region one finds that verbal scores at the University of Washington declined from 546 to 492 from the early 1970s to the late 1980s, while at the University of Oregon they went from 508 to 467. That hardly suggests a mass infusion of high-caliber students.

Zirinsky says that he does not know of any schools that “sacrifice academic excellence for social equity.” He should become acquainted with the school in Washington that Scott Larson attends and the one in California where Paul Eklof sends his children. Does Zirinsky really want talented eighth-graders reading *Secrets of the Shopping Mall*? I suspect not, yet that’s exactly the kind of educational atrocity that is bound to occur when students from widely varying ability levels are put in the same classroom and teachers are forced to aim at the lowest common denominator in assigning texts.

Zirinsky and Hugh Petrie both echo the shallow slogan so widely bandied about in the education profession these days: “All children can learn.” There is obviously much truth in that slogan, but it is also an inescapable reality that,



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for a variety of reasons, students have different capacities for learning. Any educational program that does not take that fact into account will inevitably cheat a large number of students, including the brightest ones, whose talents represent a major resource for our society.

THE OTHER UNDERCLASS

Nicholas Lemann ("The Other Underclass," December *Atlantic*) correctly concludes that there is no one-factor explanation for the underclass condition of most Puerto Ricans in New York. But there is a *principal* factor: the traditional anti-progress Ibero-American value system that explains why Latin America is so far behind the United States and Canada; why most Latin American immigrants lag behind in education, family income, and political participation (the Cuban exception chiefly reflects the middle-class, highly educated antecedents of most Cubans who fled Castro); and why half of Puerto Rico's population receives food assistance.

To crib from James Fallows's analysis of the Philippines, behind the Puerto Rican underclass lies a damaged culture, one that limits the radius of trust to the family, inhibits cooperation and a broader sense of community, encourages a fatalistic, passive view of life, and suppresses entrepreneurship.

The problem is aggravated by the back-and-forth nature of immigration from Puerto Rico, which impedes mastery of English and acculturation in general, and also by the heavy representation of poorer, less-educated Puerto Ricans in the earlier immigrant flow. That almost a million Puerto Ricans live in New York City is a further aggravant: it makes it easier to perpetuate the old value system, to avoid the American cultural mainstream, particularly when the bulk of the population lives in ghetto isolation. The departure of garment-industry jobs from New York surely didn't help.

LAWRENCE E. HARRISON
Vineyard Haven, Mass.

Nicholas Lemann makes a mistake that most demographers, politicians, and census takers make in trying to stereotype Puerto Ricans as some sort of "race" or homogenous people.

We are certainly not a race. There are blacks, whites, Asians, and Indians making up the population of P.R., and despite Lemann's depiction of Puerto Rican society to the contrary, the fact is that P.R. is as racially and economically divided as is the United States.

We are not racially homogenous, as are Afro-Americans, nor do we have a defining religion, as do the Jews. We cannot claim to be kindred countrymen, because Puerto Rico is not a sovereign state. In fact, Puerto Rico is nothing more than a Caribbean island under the control of the United States. Thus the category "Puerto Rican" is meaningless and irrelevant for the purpose of establishing a group identity.

My parents were both born in Puerto Rico. Their parents came directly from Spain. So for my family and for many others, Puerto Rico was merely a stopping point on the westward migration across the Atlantic Ocean. Whenever I fill out a form that requests my race, I simply mark down "white." The forms do not distinguish between Slavs, Serbs, Teutons, and so forth, so why should Hispanics be singled out? In any event, they are not a race.

Many people of Puerto Rican descent I have spoken to feel the same way. As a result census figures cannot and do not show that many more "Puerto Ricans" have entered the middle class than Lemann's article suggests, because many people like myself refuse to accept the legitimacy of such an artificial designation.

DENNIS RAMOS
New York, N.Y.

Nicholas Lemann replies:

I began my article on Puerto Ricans by saying that the term "Hispanic" isn't very useful, because it covers a variety of American ethnic groups that are socially, economically, and geographically quite distinct. Lawrence Harrison's emphasis on the overwhelming influence of the "Ibero-American value system" is, to my mind, not a great aid to understanding Hispanics in the United States, because it doesn't explain how American descendants of the Ibero-American culture can differ so much by country of origin. Mr. Harrison doesn't make any point in his letter that I didn't make in my article; his complaint is that I didn't identify Hispanic culture as the principal reason for the high

poverty rate of mainland Puerto Ricans. I didn't do that because I don't believe it.

I don't think I said that Puerto Ricans are a race, as Dennis Ramos contends I did. In fact, I pointed out that by U.S. standards, Puerto Rico is a multiracial society. But it is true that I presented mainland Puerto Ricans as a coherent ethnic group in the sense that most of them "feel" Puerto Rican. Mr. Ramos says this isn't the case. In support of my position I could cite the existence of a wide variety of Puerto Rican organizations, and of a substantial folklore of homesickness for the island, but ultimately, since we're talking about something nonquantifiable, it's a judgment call.

ADVICE & CONSENT

In your December Almanac you stated that Gainsborough painted *Blue Boy* and *Pinky*. Gainsborough did paint *Blue Boy*, but Sir Thomas Lawrence painted *Pinkie*.

SHIRLEE A. WARREN
Indianapolis, Ind.

Being unschooled and unlettered, I read with delight of the Maya, only to be dismayed by the responses from your very literate readers and critics. Generally I read with some envy the esoteric letters from your readers, but in the December issue they are on the prowl like ferrets after a rat. Do they read only to find fault?

JOHN R. MILLER
St. Petersburg, Fla.

Corby Kummer's article "Doorstops for Dinner" (October *Atlantic*) was very interesting and encouraged me to try more varieties of squash. With reference to the statement "I don't like potatoes cooked in a microwave oven," I suggest that red, waxy potatoes are best for microwaving, because starchy baking potatoes can become gummy.

ALMA JENSON
Queensland, N.S.

The first thing I saw when I opened the October *Atlantic* was the best: Rosanna Warren's poem "Elegist," an amazing, marvelous, knock-you-dead-in-your-shoes item.

BONITA KALE
Euclid, Ohio

FOCUSING ON EDUCATION

THIS IS PART OF AN ONGOING SERIES OF PUBLIC-SERVICE ADVERTISEMENTS SPONSORED BY ROCKWELL INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION ABOUT THE NATION'S EDUCATION CRISIS. THEY ARE PUBLISHED TO ENCOURAGE INFORMED DISCUSSION AND DEBATE.

THE BAD NEWS ABOUT AMERICAN schools today is abundant, but some schools do work. Not many. Not enough. But enough to remind us that we can do it right.

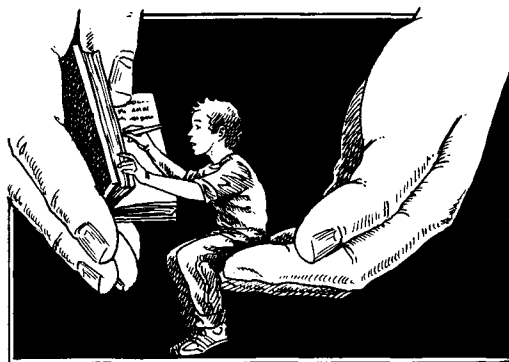
A few are widely known. The most famous is Manhattan's LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and the Performing Arts, the model for the movie *Fame*. It earned its reputation the old-fashioned way: hard work. Artistic accomplishment does not come easily; even talented kids must put in long hours. And the pace is demanding, from classical-ballet students who applaud the ballet teacher to budding playwrights who struggle with syntax and grammar, plot and character development.

The North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, founded by Governor Jim Hunt, in 1980, is a statewide residential school for high-achieving (not necessarily gifted) students. Racially and socioeconomically balanced, NCSSM does not require its teachers to hold state credentials or use state textbooks. The result? College professors on the faculty and more-demanding, not less-demanding, books.

Schools that work are found across the country: New Trier, north of Chicago; the California Academy of Mathematics and Science, in Los Angeles; Central High in Philadelphia; Whitman in Montgomery County, Maryland; Lowell in San Francisco; Brooklyn Tech, Stuyvesant, Aviation, and Murry Bergtraum, in New York. In addition, most university towns or research centers, like Huntsville, Alabama, or Los Alamos, New Mexico, are proud of their schools that work.

What do they have in common? Two things. They have terrific students and demanding staff. It is hard to overestimate how important the raw material is. But it is only part of the story. It is not everything. Teaching matters; curriculum matters; leadership matters. Most important, hard work matters.

As every athlete knows, games aren't won or records set by talent alone. Talent helps, but it's talent *and* hard work that count. Coaching brings the two together. So too in aca-



Schools That Work

BY DENIS P. DOYLE

demics. You don't become a basketball star or an academic one without practice. And you don't do it alone. You need a coach, a mentor, someone in your corner to push you, prod you, praise you.

But if we know this, why do so few schools "work"? How can Americans invest \$220 billion a year in public schools and have only a handful that are first-rate? A large part of the answer is bureaucratic inertia, lethargy, fear of change. The other is monopoly. In the public or the private sector, monopoly invariably sinks to a lowest common denominator.

High-performance organizations are

different. They are autonomous; they earn their way. They have the freedom to fail—and to succeed. They work harder and smarter. But today's good public schools are just better than average schools. To succeed in the future, they must work harder and smarter too. Better will no longer be enough.

What about schools that break the mold? Beacon Day School, in Oakland, California, is one. It is open year-round (240 days a year), from 7:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., with a developmental curriculum; students are in ungraded classrooms and proceed at their own pace. Beacon is fully integrated and has an average class size of 15. Ninety percent of parents volunteer time to the school, and 15 percent are public-school teachers. Its per-pupil cost is about two-thirds the state average.

How can Beacon do it? It's private. No red tape. No bureaucracy. The cofounders are former public-school people who went private because the public sector was too cautious. But if Beacon works for them, it can work for everyone, the model for a new "common" school, replicated across the country. And not just in the private sector. In the public sector, too. That's why they named it Beacon.

Denis P. Doyle is an education analyst and a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute. With David T. Kearns, the deputy secretary of education, he is a co-author of Winning the Brain Race: A Bold Plan to Make Our Schools Competitive (ICS Press).

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THE MARCH ALMANAC

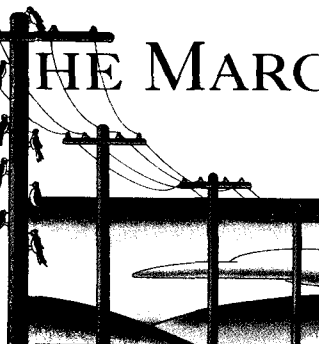
DEMOGRAPHICS

More suicides occur in March and the two months following than at any other time of year—a pattern that so far defies explanation. An increasing number are teens: the suicide rate for those aged 15–19 quadrupled from 1950 to 1988, when it reached 11.3 per 100,000. Until recently some comfort could be found in a steady decrease in the rate among Americans 65 and older. However, a study last year found that the 30-year decline reversed in 1980, so that by 1986 suicides among the elderly had increased by 21 percent, to 21.5 per 100,000. The reasons for the reversal are not definitively known, but may include increased isolation of the elderly and medical advances that prolong the lives of the chronically ill. White males account for a disproportionate number of both teen and elderly suicides, although the rate among black males in both groups is climbing sharply. For both age groups states in the West report the highest suicide rates.



THE SKIES

March 4, New Moon. 9, observers in the Northern Hemisphere have the best view of Mercury they will obtain all year. Because of the tiny planet's proximity to the Sun, it can be seen only when it reaches the eastern or western extreme of its orbit. Look for it shortly after sunset, just above the spot on the horizon where the Sun has disappeared. 17, Jupiter, very bright this time of year, appears just above the waxing Moon. 18, Full Moon, also known this month as the Sap, Crow, Lenten, Worm, or Awakening Moon. 20, at 3:48 A.M. EST, the Vernal Equinox: winter ends.



ENVIRONMENT

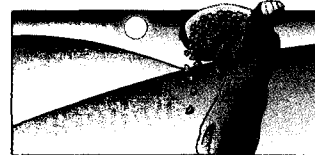
This is the time of year when woodpeckers are most prone to exhibit the behavior for which they are named. Woodpecker damage—often superficial—can occur almost anytime the birds feed, but it is in early spring, in anticipation of mating season, that they are most likely to excavate huge holes to establish territory, to serve as nests, and perhaps simply to dispel hormonal restlessness. Among their victims are countless utility poles, which can be weakened to the point where they snap on windy days or under a lineman's weight. The birds can be infuriatingly specific in their territoriality: particular poles sometimes have to be replaced several times a season, at a cost that can reach \$15,000 per pole, while their immediate neighbors stand untouched for years. (In most such cases the utility eventually opts for a steel or concrete pole.)

ARTS & LETTERS

This month marks the beginning of New York City's peak filmmaking season, which lasts through the summer. Springtime scheduling capitalizes on New York's well-defined seasons: trees that are bare in early March can be in full leaf by April, enabling filmmakers to shoot a yearlong story sequence in just a month. (Filmmakers in Los Angeles employ their own sort of arboreal illusion, simulating eastern climes by wrapping palms in bark from deciduous trees.) Some 130 permits for feature films



are issued in New York in a typical year, making the city second only to Los Angeles in this respect. The New York Mayor's Office of Film, Theater, and Broadcasting helps filmmakers scout locations, cast extras, and even rewrite scripts, and provides a police unit to control traffic and crowds—all free of charge. In return, filmmaking and related ventures bring some \$3 billion in revenues to the city each year.



FOOD

This month Sudanese farmers tap *Acacia senegal* trees—a process they will repeat in October—to harvest the world's richest store of gum arabic, a key additive in beverages and confectionery in this country. This year's crop is expected to be robust. But many of the world's users of gum arabic weaned themselves from it in the mid-1980s, following a drought in Sudan. Food technologists are continually working to create replacements for ingredients found only in regions whose climates—and governments—can be unstable. So far even the best substitutes for gum arabic, however, have drawbacks, and they cannot appear in any product labeled “all natural”—a state of affairs that would no doubt hearten the million or so Sudanese whose principal income derives from the sap.

GOVERNMENT

March 3, presidential primary elections are held in Colorado and Maryland; 7, in South Carolina; and 10 (“Super Tuesday”), in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Tennessee, and Texas. On the last Super Tuesday, in 1988, primaries or caucuses



were held in 20 states, mainly in the South. Southern Democrats had hoped that this clustering would produce a conservative southern Democratic candidate. Instead, Jesse Jackson made the strongest Democratic showing, and George Bush garnered both parties' conservative votes. 17, primaries in Illinois and Michigan, and 24, in Connecticut. Also this month the U.S. Postal Service begins distributing job surveys to its 730,000 employees, in response to low worker morale. Disgruntled postal workers have caused eight shooting incidents, and 33 fatalities, since 1983.

125 YEARS AGO

James Parton, writing in the March, 1867, issue of *The Atlantic Monthly*: “The peril of America is the over-schooling of her children. In Chicago, as everywhere else, the grand fault of the public schools is, that too much is attempted in them. The Board of Education is ambitious; the superintendent is ambitious; the teachers, the parents, the children, are ambitious; and there is nowhere in the system any one who stands between these co-operating ambitions and the delicate organization of the children. Five hours' school a day, with two hours' intermission, and no lessons learned at home,—these are our colors, and we nail them to the mast. Even on Sundays the poor children have no rest from eternal school and the stimulating influence of older minds.”



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REPORTS & COMMENT

NOTES

The First Brick

*Further word on a line of inquiry
that could supplant economics
as scholarship's premier
"dismal science"*

SEVERAL MONTHS ago in this space I had occasion to mention an article by Ralph G. H. Siu, who is a chemist, a former director of the Justice Department's National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice, the author of *Microbial Decomposition of Cellulose* and other books, and the progenitor of something called panetics, which is the study of the infliction of suffering. Siu had published an article about panetics in the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* in which he proposed the establishment of a basic unit of suffering, to be called the "dukkha" (from the word for "suffering" in Pali, a language spoken by the Buddha). The dukkha would play a role with respect to suffering analogous to that played by the calorie with respect to heat, though it would necessarily be calibrated with less precision. To determine the value of a dukkha, Siu began by dividing all suf-

fering into a number of intensity levels, from level one ("barely noticeable") to level nine ("unbearable, wanting to die"); he then defined a dukkha as the amount of suffering experienced in one full day by a person whose suffering for the duration of that day is at intensity level one. In his article Siu offered several intriguing calculations based on his conversion of data on unemployment, crime, pollution, and other ills into dukkha equivalents. (He noted, for example, that in one recent year the population of the United States had endured some seven percent of the theoretical maximum of suffering that could have been inflicted on it in that year.) And he went on, finally, to urge the installation of panetics as a new academic discipline at America's colleges and universities: a discipline both theoretical and applied, which would at last give the causes, nature, and quan-

tification of suffering the attention they deserve.

My reaction to Siu's proposal at the time, though I didn't dwell on it in print, can be fairly described as skeptical. Acquiring the means to perform a sophisticated calculus on human suffering could, I suppose, assist in its alleviation. This is certainly the argument that a paneticist would advance. But I worry that suffering may be one of those conditions, like coldness or debt, that an ability to quantify may only make more distressing. Moreover, I am uncomfortable with the idea that in a world calibrated in dukkhas it would be possible to assert equivalences between certain levels of radically different kinds of suffering—grief, hunger, illness, and envy, for example—much as in a world calibrated in dollars one can find paintings, real estate, horseflesh, and human lives of seemingly equal value.

Furthermore, should we not be concerned that panetics could in the wrong hands be used to intensify rather than alleviate suffering, and to do so on a scale never before imagined?

Those thoughts, at any rate, came to mind—as did the realization that the whole issue was probably moot. The possibility that the dukkha had much of a future in academe seemed somehow remote.

RALPH G. H. SIU has, however, been busy. Not long ago I received a copy of a book by Siu, its spine bound with plastic rings,

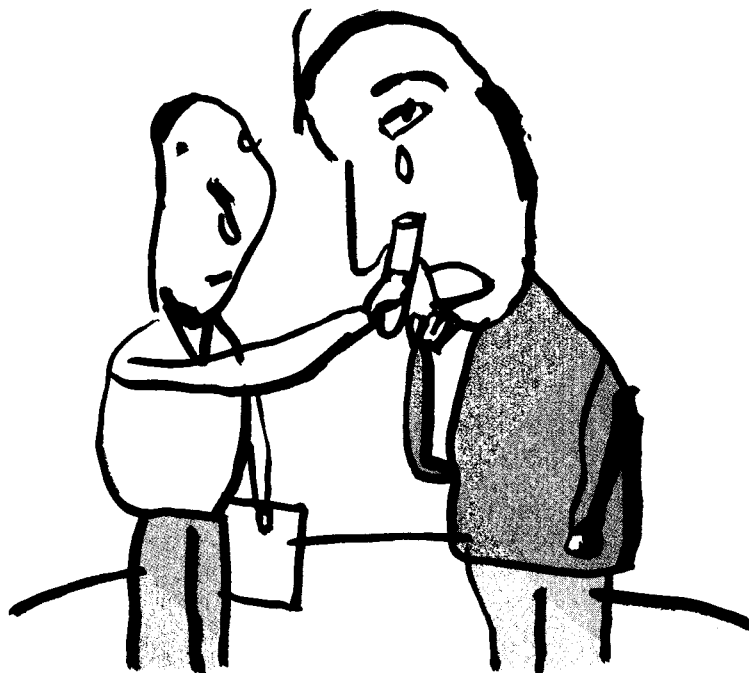


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titled *Less Suffering for Everybody: A Guide to Panetics*. Along with the book were some stapled sheaves of paper labeled *Deliberation Distillates*—a newsletter that began last year, containing excerpts of communications with Siu from forty or so people identified as founding members of a new organization called The International Society for Panetics. *Deliberation Distillates*, which serves as an epistolary form of meeting, was inaugurated by a memorandum from Siu to his colleagues that closed with the charge “And so, my fellow Founding Members, may the fertile ideas gush forth!”

This package of materials on panetics was sent to me by one of the founding members, whom I happen to know. He wrote that the first meeting of the ISP’s eleven-member board had just been held at the Cosmos Club, in Washington, D.C., and that a plenary session of founding members in Washington later this year would officially heave the society into public view. The roster of the ISP’s founding members is a distinguished one, if diverse in that slightly discordant way for which we reserve the word “motley.” Although most of the members, like the noted economist Kenneth E. Boulding, are academics, the group also includes many people from other walks of life: for example, Patrick V. Murphy, the former police commissioner of New York City, and Gus Tyler, the former assistant president of the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union. Interest in panetics seems to be nearly as indiscriminate as suffering itself.

I reached Ralph Siu by telephone one afternoon at his home in Washington. He is an irrepressibly affable man of seventy-three who was born in Honolulu to Chinese parents and who retains as legacies of his traditional Chinese upbringing a slight accent and a fondness for proverbs. He spent most of his career in U.S. government service, much of it as the deputy director of research and engineering in the Army Materiel Command. Starting in 1944 he undertook as a hobby what he describes as “the complete psychophilosophical integration of Eastern and Western ways of thinking.” So far six volumes of a projected twelve-volume series on this subject have been published (three by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, three by John Wiley & Sons). Two others, in

what is to be known as the Panetics Trilogy, have been written and distributed informally. One of Siu’s earliest books, *The Portable Dragon: A Layman’s Guide to the I Ching* (MIT, 1968), was a best seller, and has never been out of print.

Siu speaks with an eager hopefulness that endows even terms like “inflation capacity” and “panetic dominance” with a fetching lilt. He explained that the aims of the ISP, at least at the beginning, are twofold. The first task is to refine the definition of the dukkha, and to achieve a consensus on the types of objective and subjective conditions to which it can legitimately be applied. “There’s an international unit of Vitamin A,” Siu told me. “In the same way, we need a standard international unit of suffering we can use for social policy.” He stated emphatically that the society was not wedded to the dukkha, that it was merely a provisional standard, and added, “I don’t want to rule out other options.” Assuming, though, that the dukkha, however defined, remains a viable panetic unit, an eventual goal of the society would be to produce an annual estimate of this country’s gross national dukkhas as a supplement to other social indicators that are commonly used to gauge trends in the U.S. population’s general well-being.

The second objective is the creation of a “panetic-systems atlas,” which would diagram the various ways in which suffering moves about the world. “Let’s take a prison system,” Siu said. “On the one hand, you can identify the number of dukkhas being inflicted on inmates in many different ways, and on the other, you can identify all the dukkhas being ameliorated in different ways. So you can map all these streams going in and going out, and make a dukkha-flow diagram. Then you can see where the big dukkhas really are. You might find that where the big dukkhas are is not necessarily what is getting all the attention.” The goal, Siu explained, would be to produce such maps for people and institutions of all kinds—for families, workplaces, schools, government bureaucracies, and whole political entities of ever larger size. “Someday,” he said brightly, “you could diagram the whole United States. Can you imagine all the thousands, all the millions, of streams of dukkhas going in and out?”

Siu paused for a moment, and then added, “That will, of course, take decades and decades of bricklaying. But someone has to lay the first brick. And it is not just for the sake of knowledge, though there is that. The sooner we put panetics into practice, the sooner some suffering person will be relieved.”

EVERY SO OFTEN there is a newspaper account of astronomers who have stumbled on some impossibly distant cosmic phenomenon that they believe could represent the birth of a star. In front of reporters the scientists theorize with barely repressed excitement, intoxicated by the prospect of boundless possibility. That is the tone one encounters in *Deliberation Distillates*. Needless to say, only time will tell if what we are witnessing is truly the birth of a new scholarly discipline. Many of the telltale signs of such an occurrence are present: the acquisition of tax-exempt status for the society, the talk of applying for grants and otherwise seeking “support,” of founding a journal, attracting graduate students, holding an international conference. If the idea of the paneticist’s dukkha seems to some people too arbitrary or cut-and-dried, so at one time must have seemed the economist’s man-hour, the engineer’s horsepower. My original reservations were not really put to rest in my conversation with Siu, but I did come away feeling that he was appropriately cast in the role of the Max Weber of panetics—perhaps, indeed, was the only person up to the job.

And what if the endeavor should founder? I expect that Siu will see things in perspective, that he will endure no more than a few dukkhas before equanimity returns. “I don’t know if I have a single favorite proverb,” he said at one point in our conversation, “but one that my father always told me was, ‘A full stomach is heaven; the rest is luxury.’”

In the meantime, we can all hope that Ralph G. H. Siu at least brings to a conclusion volume eleven of his twelve-volume series. “It is going to be about cheerfulness,” he explained, “which I regard as the pinnacle of harmony with the universe.” The basic unit, I respectfully propose, should be called the siu.

—Cullen Murphy

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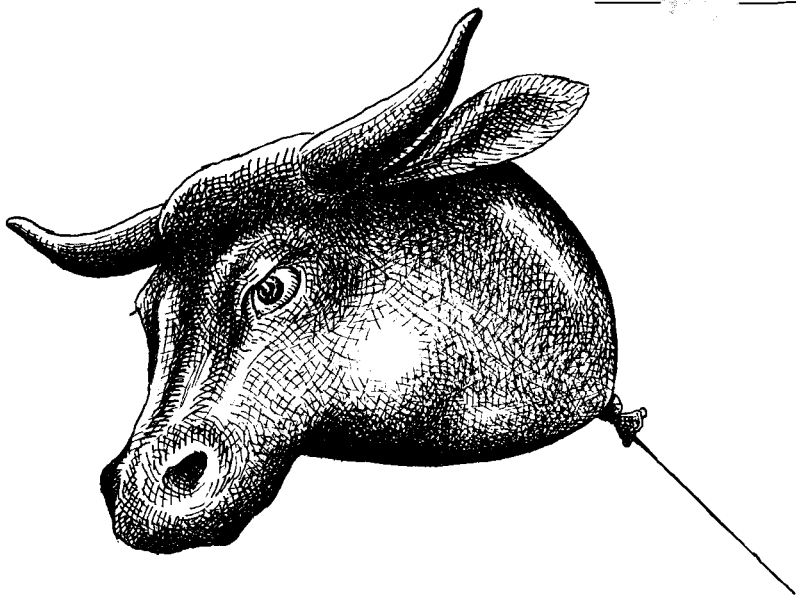
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BUSINESS

Bankrupt and Bullish

The American invention of a fresh start for failed businesses has gone awry

ANYONE WHO has recently bought a Slurpee at a 7-Eleven, a ticket on a Greyhound bus, or a shirt at Bloomingdale's has participated in an increasingly popular kind of corporate reincarnation. All these companies have declared bankruptcy without any intention of going out of business. All have sought to cancel debts and start life anew—to "reorganize," as allowed by Chapter 11 of the bankruptcy code. It's a growing phenomenon. Since 1980 the number of companies seeking to reorganize under Chapter 11 has tripled, to 20,783 in 1990. These include some of the best-known names in corporate America. Eleven companies with assets of \$1 billion or more declared bankruptcy in 1991, all of them seeking new life.

Giving failed businesses a second chance is a uniquely American and relatively recent invention. Traditionally businesses have had two choices: life or death. In most European and Asian countries missed payments to banks or suppliers which cannot be renegotiated lead to the appointment of a receiver, followed by liquidation (the sale of the company or its assets to pay creditors).

In this country Congress drew different lessons from history. The bad breaks of the Depression amended the old notion that an entrepreneur had only himself to blame for going broke. Successful restructuring of railroads and utilities added powerful images of failed businesses that were worth saving. The spectacular growth of the postwar credit economy, with its ever more intricate corporate financial arrangements, complicated voluntary efforts to revive businesses in trouble. So Congress added a third choice: reorganization. Used by a few failing firms in the 1950s and 1960s, and made easier to use by an overhaul of the bankruptcy laws in 1978, reorganization in bankruptcy took hold as a favored way to salvage troubled companies during the tumultuous 1980s.

Up to a point this second chance makes sense. Some failing companies are worth less dead than alive. Even good managers make mistakes, often by expanding too fast. Man and nature create catastrophic events that drain resources even when long-term prospects are bright. Selling what's left to the highest bidder cannot always recapture value. In bad times buyers are scarce, and a business's current problems may obscure future promise. But the misuse of the opportunity for corporate reincarnation provided by Chapter 11 has swamped a good idea with wasteful excesses.

Bankruptcy has become a twilight zone where big companies can dwell for years, their creditors unpaid, their businesses languishing, their employees and customers unable to plan for the future. Bad managers can remain in

charge, because it's almost impossible to remove them if they don't want to go. By paying off some debts and being excused from others, they can hope to emerge with most of the business—and their own jobs—intact. And bankruptcy court has become an absurd last stop for societal problems, such as overwhelming pension obligations and asbestos liability, that cannot possibly be resolved there. Hazardous-waste disposal may become the next big social problem to land in bankruptcy court.

This need not be. Almost everything about the way bankruptcy works is an invention of government. The problems are not inevitable events but the result of political choices. Having given failed businesses the opportunity for a second chance, Congress can make the idea work better. But whether Congress can muster enthusiasm for more than spot repairs is unclear. The present system has powerful beneficiaries—not only threatened corporate managers but also lawyers, accountants, and investment bankers who advise both bankrupt companies and their creditors. Sadly, bankruptcy has become a growth industry.

THIS WAS NOT always so. For most of our history we have been a nation hostile to debtors. The Constitution allowed Congress to make "uniform laws on the subject of bankruptcies." But for the first hundred years Congress had trouble doing that. Debtors' relief was considered immoral, so that bankruptcy laws passed in times of financial panic were soon repealed. Congress finally passed a permanent bankruptcy law in 1898, to relieve "those who were carried down by the current" of the Panic of 1893. As amended in 1938, it remained in force until the next general overhaul of the law, fourteen years ago. It allowed both businesses and individuals to erase their debts after paying what they could. Businesses were usually liquidated. Individuals got a chance to start again.

Free of the shadow of the Depression, businesses in the 1960s took on more debt. Some companies borrowed heavily to build giant conglomerates held together only by financial glue. By the early 1970s, when the mammoth reorganization of the Penn Central Railroad shocked the financial world, a few big retailers and some real-estate



Jack
Kerouac

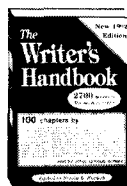
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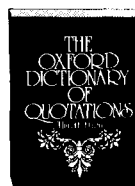
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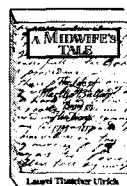
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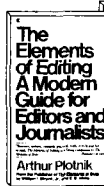
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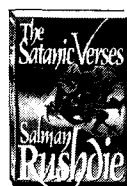
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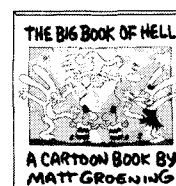
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investment trusts had reorganized in bankruptcy to adjust to changing markets.

Everyone agrees that the 1978 law put an end to some existing abuses and made many genuine improvements. A spoils system known as "the bankruptcy ring" had been thriving in some parts of the country. Judges formed cozy relationships with the trustees they appointed to oversee cases. Trustees got large fees while creditors got little or nothing. The congressional commission that recommended revisions found that the procedure for dividing up assets had become "the product of the pressure of special interest . . . encrusted with qualifications and exceptions . . . until it is intolerably complicated and is unjust."

The new law encouraged firms to solve their problems early by reorganizing so that they would not have to shut down later. It assumed that keeping the business going was plainly better "than those same assets sold for scrap," as the House report put it. Any business could file, by paying a court fee (today \$600), automatically stopping creditors from moving in to seize the firm's property, and buying time for managers to try to turn a profit. There was no requirement of insolvency, nor was anyone obliged to take a hard look at whether assets could be put to better use. A kind of forced negotiation followed, ending with a vote by creditors on whether to accept management's plan to improve business and pay at least some bills. Disgruntled lenders were forced to accept losses, because reorganization plans were approved if more than half the creditors holding at least two thirds of the debt agreed to them, allowing the firm to stay in business and cancel other debts. Lawyers and accountants were encouraged to charge full fees in order to attract capable professionals.

The new law was supposed to make reorganization less confusing. Each creditor got a place in line. Secured creditors came first, followed by people who made loans to the company while it was in bankruptcy. Ordinary business expenses came next, including professional fees. Then came unsecured creditors given priority by Congress: employees owed back wages and benefits, grain farmers and fishermen owed money (their lobbyists were more effective than others'), cus-

tomers, and government entities owed taxes. Anything left was to be divided among remaining creditors, including bondholders.

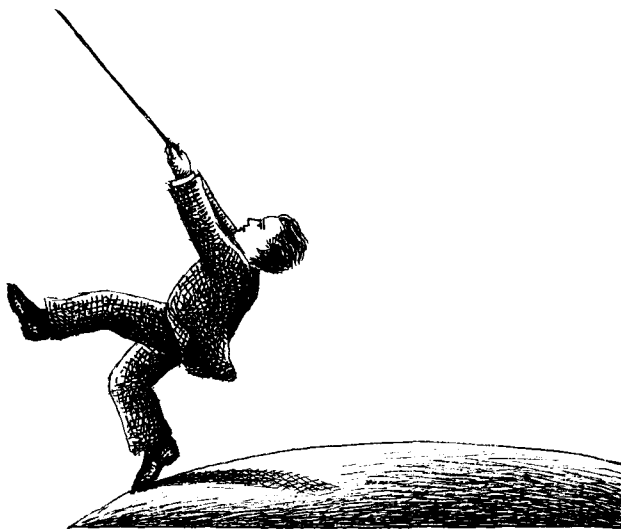
THE FLAW in this reform was its failure to distinguish between good businesses with bad balance sheets and bad businesses with bad balance sheets. By welcoming all comers, the new law encouraged managers of hopeless businesses to engage in colossally expensive wishful thinking. Yes, it has helped healthy businesses recover from catastrophes. But it has also legitimized decay by providing several ways to avoid a needed day of reckoning. And it has brought new customers to Wall Street's casino.

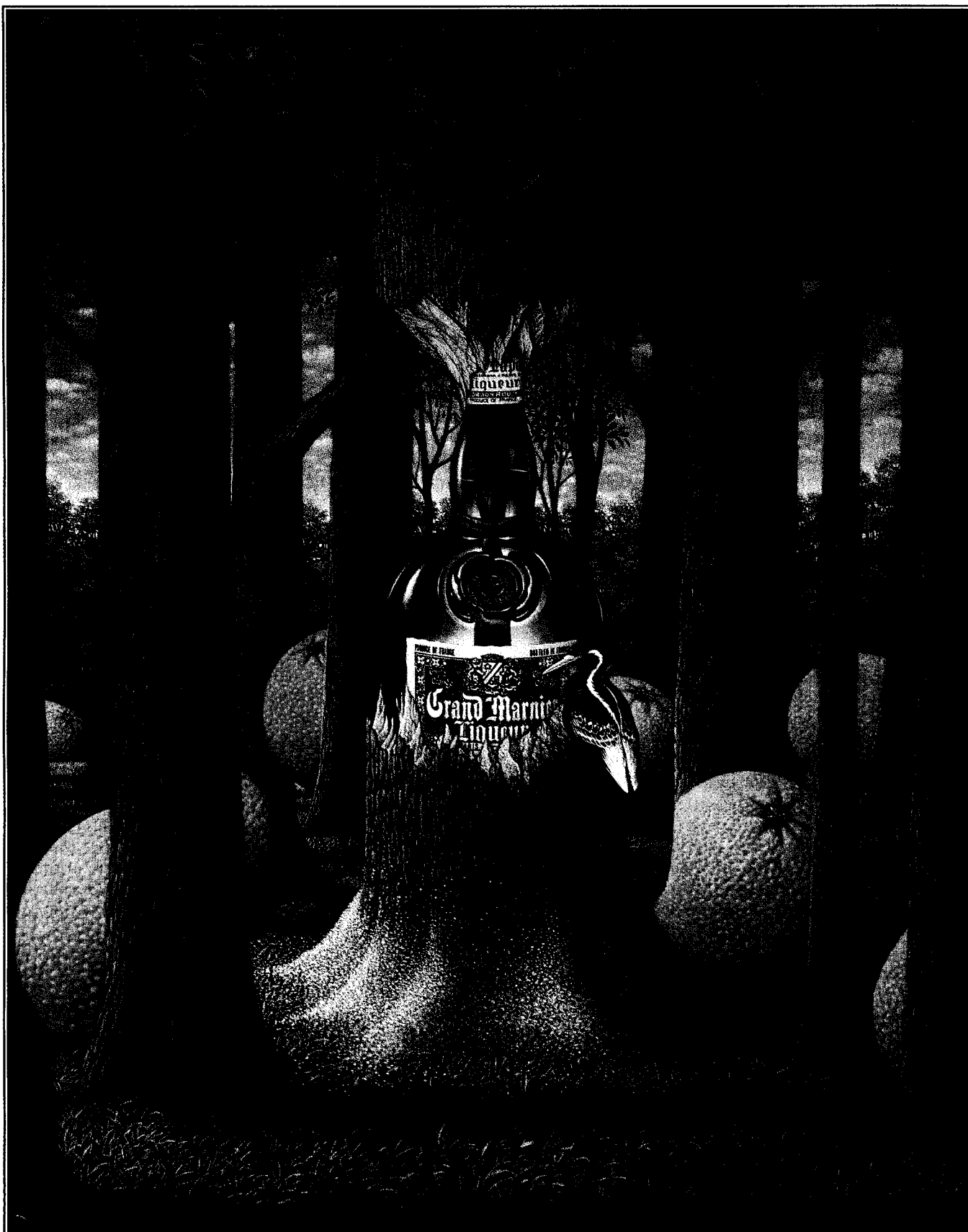
The central problem is simple: too many businesses are encouraged to reorganize. Bankruptcy judges have been told by Congress that reorganization is better than liquidation. Firms in trouble postpone the inevitable, hoping for better times. Creditors want to stay on good terms with present management in case the business survives, and have an understandable aversion to facing up to their lending mistakes. And attempts to force liquidation or a change in management take time and money and may be unsuccessful.

The Eastern Airlines story made this point on a scale no one could ignore. When Eastern declared bankruptcy to reorganize, in 1989, it had a net worth of more than \$1 billion, and its chairman, Frank A. Lorenzo, proposed a plan to pay all its creditors in full. Twenty-two months later virtually all of the money that would have gone to unsecured creditors had been used up

in a futile attempt to keep the planes flying, in fees for lawyers, accountants, and investment bankers, and in other expenses. Despite the calls of angry creditors to liquidate the company, in November of 1990 Judge Burton R. Lifland released a final \$120 million for operations. Two months later the company shut down. At the end Eastern was losing nearly \$2 million a day. No bankruptcy court could ever have fixed Eastern's problems. Its weaknesses as a business predated by years the doubling of fuel prices and the precipitous drop in passengers that accompanied Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

In fact, the availability of Chapter 11 probably encouraged Lorenzo's confrontational tactics. In 1983, before he took charge of Eastern, he sought to reorganize Continental Airlines in order to cut labor costs. Continental went into bankruptcy, Lorenzo said at the time, "not because it didn't have a future but because we thought it had a hell of a future." Negotiated contracts were thrown out. Thousands of employees lost their jobs overnight. Lawyers and other professionals earned \$60 million in fees. But Continental emerged from bankruptcy, and—using more than \$1 billion raised with the help of Michael Milken—Lorenzo went on a buying binge, making high-risk acquisitions of companies like People Express, Frontier, and Eastern Airlines. By mid-1990 Continental was burdened with so much debt that it could not withstand the temporary jolt of increased fuel prices and plummeting passenger bookings. Lorenzo finally lost his job in August, when a foreign investor, Scandinavian Airline System,





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demanding his departure as a condition of increasing its stake in the company. In December of 1990 the airline filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection again.

Lorenzo is hardly unique. Too many free-spending managers whose mistakes led to bankruptcy are encouraged to stay in charge and to use bankruptcy as a way to get more credit. Perversely, Chapter 11 protects existing executives by giving them the exclusive right to decide how to reorganize the company. Judges regularly extend for years the four months management is given to propose a reorganization plan. LTV, a troubled conglomerate and the nation's third largest steel company, which has been stalled in bankruptcy court since 1986, proposed a plan last year after five years of extensions. Sometimes in the long course of reorganization creditors insist on a management change and managers are willing to go. But replacing a manager who doesn't want to go is very difficult. The appointment of a trustee to run the company while it is being reorganized usually requires a court finding of fraud or gross mismanagement. Theoretically, a bad manager can also be replaced if creditors want him out, but it rarely happens. "You have to file a trustee motion, and the business can go down the drain while you're fighting," says Leonard Rosen, a lawyer for creditors and the chairman of the National Bankruptcy Conference, an organization of lawyers, judges, and professors which advises Congress. It doesn't make sense for managers who made the highly leveraged transactions of the 1980s to stay in charge while their firms become the giant bankruptcies of the 1990s.

In some cases executives go into Chapter 11 because it's the only way they can persuade creditors to let them get deeper in debt. To encourage reorganization, Congress brought about this odd situation by giving priority to creditors who lend to firms in bankruptcy. Paul Harris, one of some 300 retailers to declare bankruptcy in the first three months of 1991, went into court to reorganize so that banks would provide another \$19 million in short-term financing to keep the company afloat. David R. Hinson, Midway Airlines' chairman and chief executive officer, explained in March of 1991 that the airline was declaring bankruptcy to get a large loan from Continental Bank. Likewise, Pan

Am declared bankruptcy to get \$150 million from Bankers Trust.

Bankruptcy court can also be a good hiding place for real-estate investors trying to postpone the tax liability that accompanies foreclosure. Partners in real-estate ventures who are unable to make mortgage payments can hold off the bank for as long as the judge will let the case linger in court. "In seventy or eighty percent of the real-estate cases the judge ought to say, 'Wait a second, what are you guys doing here?'" says Robin Phelan, a director of the American Bankruptcy Institute who practices bankruptcy law in Dallas, where such filings became common in the mid-1980s. Bankruptcy judges in Texas are getting tougher about letting such cases languish in court. But in some parts of the recession-stricken Northeast much of the increase in business bankruptcy filings consists of cases of this type.

Chapter 11 is also used by debtors and creditors who avoid admitting past mistakes by reorganizing in a way that may look good on paper but has a slim chance of working. Reorganization produces a blizzard of paper theoretically worth some number of cents for each dollar previously invested. But reorganizations, like the highly leveraged transactions of the 1980s, can be hollow deals, filled with unrealistic assumptions about future business performance. For both debtors and creditors, the system rewards postponement of pain. *Forbes* noted in an article last March that banks, insurance companies, and other large institutional investors are holding billions of dollars of debt with a real value much lower than that shown on their balance sheets.

Guessing the future of bankrupt companies has become big business. Wall Street investment firms that like to live dangerously buy stocks of bankrupt companies when rumors make the company look a little better and then sell before reality drives the stock price down again. Other traders buy new stocks and bonds issued by companies as they emerge from bankruptcy court, guessing that business will improve, at least for a while.

BANKRUPTCY courts are also becoming a dumping ground for unsolved social problems. This is part of the high price we are paying for having adopted sweeping reforms in

the 1960s and 1970s without paying attention to the enormous financial consequences they were sure to have. Congress went along with requirements established by the courts that companies pay for injuries caused by defective products or toxic substances, but it failed to make rules about fairness and consistency of awards to those injured. Congress insured pension plans but never required companies to keep them fully funded. Congress told companies to clean up their hazardous wastes but never made clear what should happen when there wasn't enough money to get the job done. Not surprisingly, these problems and others are turning up in bankruptcy court and raising the question that is finally unavoidable: Who gets paid when a business fails?

Bankruptcy courts were never supposed to decide how much men and women injured on the job by harmful substances should be paid. But around the country they are taking on the nation's largest liability question—how to compensate hundreds of thousands of people who have been made ill by asbestos over the past fifty years. Federal courts granted rights to recovery, and asbestos producers have gone broke paying claims. So far, eleven of twenty-five major companies that produced asbestos have declared bankruptcy. Many bills that were intended to provide fair ways of handling compensation have been debated in House and Senate committees over the years. Not one has been enacted. Bankruptcy courts are left wrestling with the impossible question of how to divide what's left.

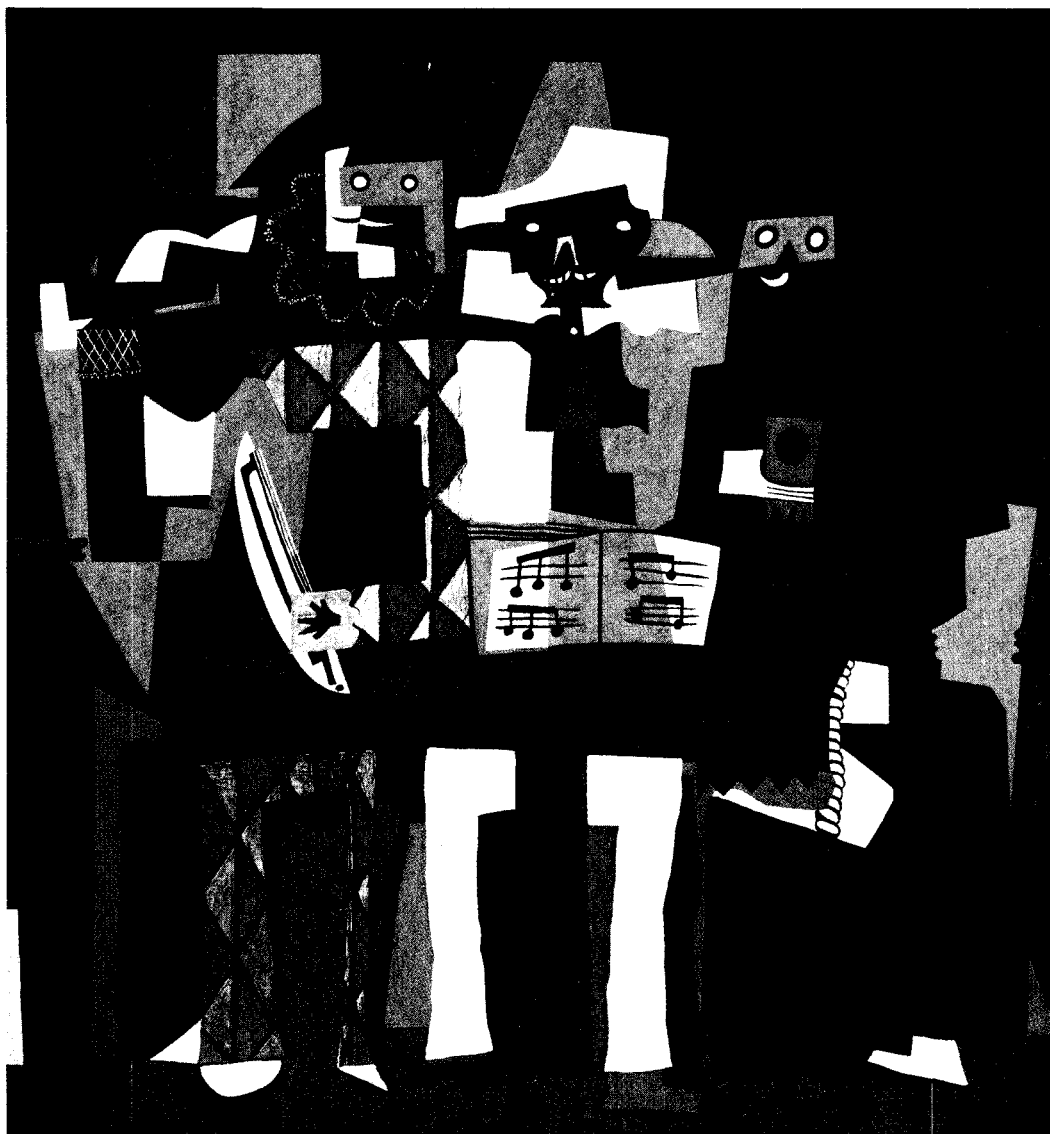
The biggest asbestos company, the Manville Corporation, spent six years in bankruptcy court. People who were sick got nothing during that time, because the bankruptcy rules put all claims on hold while rights are sorted out. When a court-created trust fund worth \$2.2 billion finally did start paying claims, in 1988, it ran short of money within a year, after settling only 25,000 of 140,000 claims. The people who happened to file their claims first got, on average, \$43,000. People who filed later got less, and no effort was made to give priority to those who were sickest. So far lawyers have gotten most of the money. Roughly two thirds of the money paid out by Manville and

(Continued on page 37)

arts & ENTERTAINMENT

PREVIEW

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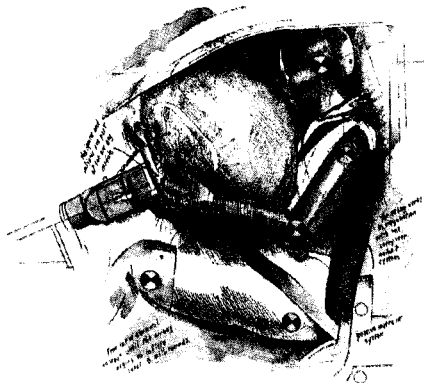
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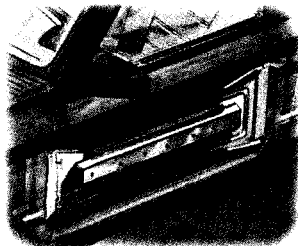


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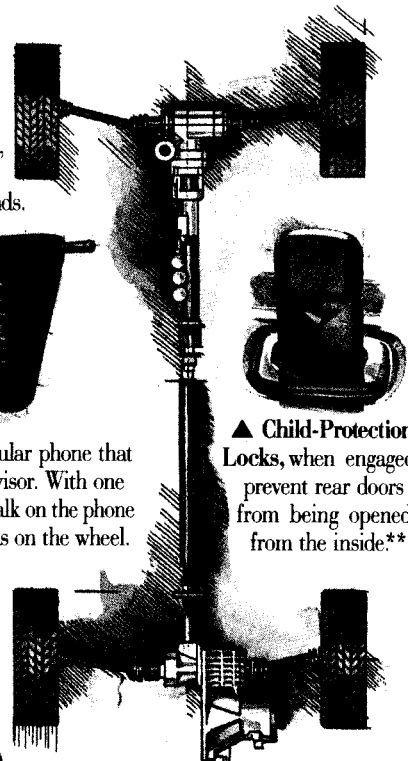


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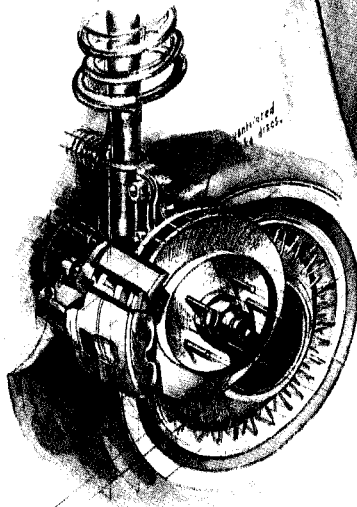


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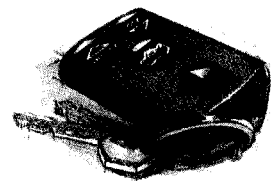


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DANCE AND THEATER

by Laura Jacobs and Matthew Gurewitsch

ALL THE DANCE NUMBERS

Our first Arts & Entertainment Poll asked the question "Which do you consider a more vital art form, ballet or modern dance?"

BALLET: 41%

MODERN DANCE: 39%

BOTH OR NEITHER: 20%

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ally opposed but happy to play Ping-Pong. *Atlantic* readers, no matter which they prefer, tend to equate expressiveness and a sort of primal vitality with modern dance—a view that's been with us at least since 1912, when Nijinsky's modern-leaning *L'Après midi d'un faune* was defended in *Le Matin* for its "freedom of instinct." Readers labeled ballet formal, disciplined, a "charming history," an essential foundation. Today, of course, modern dance is genealogically more branched than the balletic family tree (we've come a long way from "Petals on a wet, black bough"); meanwhile, classical dance is in transition—so many of the century's ballet artists died of old age in the 1980s.

One fifth of respondents didn't want to choose one form over the other, feeling, as E. Glick of California put it, "This is like asking 'Which child do you love best?'" The rest of the readers split almost evenly between modern and ballet—perhaps a surprisingly high figure for classicism, but then a case could be made that the rigorous order and encompassing sensibility of classical dance may in fact offer more surprises to a generation that cut its teeth on a solid-gold Madonna and the pseudo-steps of M.C. Hammer.

Indeed, the demands of the classical technique have inspired modern and postmodern choreographers to some of their best work. While Mark Morris's dances hug the earth and revel in a kind of hippie love and potter's-wheel homeliness (so many of his dances are funeral urns), the masterly piece he did for ABT, *Drink to Me Only With Thine Eyes*, wore a crown of laurel. And Tharp's ragging, gum-cracking attitude acquired metaphorical depth when applied to ballet's rarefied world. Merce Cunningham, zen-master of postmodernism, has always used the classical vocabulary in his boundless dances—but like tough turtle eggs: steps dropped, angled, buried in space. The company will be at the New York City Center, March 17 to 29.

From March 12 to April 12, the Boston Ballet presents "On the Edge," a festival that celebrates the relationships of contemporary/modern choreographers and classical dancers by performing works by Susan Marshall, Elisa Monte, Bill T. Jones, Mark Morris, Twyla Tharp, and others. Also of interest: the Joffrey Ballet, on tour this month and next through Minneapolis, St. Louis, Ft. Lauderdale, Chicago, and Los Angeles, boasts two new works from that mistress of spinning, Laura Dean, plus an homage to Native Americans by post-Pilobolus Peter Pucci.

—L.J.



Boston Ballet

NOW YOU SEE IT...

Reduced to its mechanics, the classic Bunraku theater of Japan seems so cumbersome that one may wonder why it exists at all. The "actors" are puppets, about two-thirds human scale, each attended



Master and puppet

by three handlers, who operate in plain sight, wrapped from top to toe in black crepe; only the face of the master, who works one puppet's head and right hand, is uncovered. But within seconds one would swear that the puppets are self-propelled, alive—even (or especially?) at those shocking moments when they whirl around and stare nose to nose into the void of the face of the master. Here is the picture of will versus destiny: the supreme theme of drama, philosophy in action.

Visits by the Bunraku are rare. Usually, they bring a potpourri of excerpts, fascinating in their variety. This time, the program is more challenging and potentially even more rewarding: the classic *Love Sui-cides* at *Sonezaki* presented in its entirety. Simultaneous translation is available. They will perform at City Center in New York, March 10 to 14, and at the University of Hawaii later this month.

—M.G.

Laura Jacobs is the editor-in-chief of Stagebill and a dance critic for The New Leader. Matthew Gurewitsch is a writer who lives in New York.

DIRECT FROM STRATFORD-UPON-BURBANK



Kelly McGillis

Playing Shakespeare is no way for an American actor to get rich, but even for some who have more lucrative options, the experience is irresistible. For the past few seasons, the classically trained Kelly McGillis, whose voluptuous, skeptical beauty is known to movie audiences from *Witness* and *The Accused*, has found a spiritual home at the Shakespeare Theatre's picturesque—but for the audience excruciatingly uncomfortable—playhouse of the Folger Library, in Washington, D.C. So it is apt that she should be leading the company

in *Much Ado About Nothing*, the inaugural production under a much-needed new roof in the historic Lansburgh building. Her role: the sharp-tongued Beatrice, tricked into falling in love (through April 5). In May, McGillis follows up with Isabella in *Measure for Measure*, a religious novice whose virtue is put to a cruel test.

Meanwhile, Stephen Lang, with a sheaf of golden notices in his scrapbook for recent appearances on stage and film (*A Few Good Men*, *Last Exit to Brooklyn*), joins the Roundabout Theatre Company from April 2 to May 3 at its new Broadway location as Hamlet. He is not one to croon moody music in the monologues, but his cunning, ferocity, and coiled muscularity should make for a dangerous avenger.

—M.G.

FILM

by Ella Taylor

In keeping with the occasion, I'd like to thank my public and my publicist, my personal trainer, and my inner child for helping me to give creative birth to these free-form, we-do-it-all-for-Art Academy Award nominations. You're all beautiful.

MY OWN PRIVATE OSCARS

Best Picture: Mike Leigh's brilliantly improvised *Life Is Sweet*, another of the British director's deadly serious comedies about a working-class London family getting through the day against all the odds, gives you a heady sense of stumbling on something completely spontaneous between people you might easily know but have never met. His movies don't have plots, they have life—grand themes played out in the small details of daily routine.



Life Is Sweet

Runners-Up: *My Own Private Idaho*, Gus Van Sant's loony, affecting road movie about two young street hustlers cruising the director's beloved Pacific Northwest. *La Belle Noiseuse*, Jacques Rivette's gorgeous four-hour meditation on art, life, and truth, is brave to the point of foolhardiness: it has a 15-minute scene of a painter sketching that isn't boring.

Best New Director: Wendell B. Harris for *Chameleon Street*, an elegantly made docufiction based on the life of the Detroit con artist Doug Street. Harris's sardonic film is—usefully—a critic's nightmare: a film about a black man we can neither love nor pity, who's neither a cop nor a crack-head nor a white hero's sidekick, and who's in no immediate sense a victim.

Runner-Up: Jennie Livingston for *Paris Is Burning*, an exuberant, sympathetic documentary about Harlem's black and Latino drag queens—a romantic, committed anthropology celebrating an ostracized community bent on making their lives not just tolerable but dignified and optimistic.

Best Screenplay: James Toback for the alternately deadpan and feverish scatology of his script for Barry Levinson's *Bugsy*.

Runner Up: Sarah Kernochan for the

bitchy, urbane sparkle of her screenwriting for *Impromptu*, James LaPine's free interpretation of the love affair between George Sand and Frederic Chopin.

Best Actor: River Phoenix for his blitzed, gently forlorn performance as the narcoleptic street hustler in *My Own Private Idaho*.

Runners-Up: Warren Beatty for his readiness to make a complete fool of himself as the whacked-out Bugsy Siegel; Michel Piccoli for his quietly authoritative rendition of the aging French painter trying to recover his muse in *La Belle Noiseuse*.

Best Actress: A tie between Mercedes Ruehl for her gloriously tarty and intelligent rendering of Jeff Bridges's long-suffering girlfriend in Terry Gilliam's *The Fisher King*; and Susan Sarandon for acting her age with earthy style in Ridley Scott's *Thelma and Louise*.

Runner-Up: Kerry Fox for the subtle range of her performance as the painfully shy New Zealand writer Janet Frame in Jane Campion's *An Angel at My Table*.

Best Supporting Actor: Harvey Keitel for his monosyllabic menace as Bugsy Siegel's sidekick, Mickey Cohen.

Runner-Up: George T. Odom for his heart-breaking mixture of bewildered rage and vulnerability as the hard-drinking father in Matty Rich's *Straight Out of Brooklyn*.



Bugsy

Best Supporting Actress: Jane Horrocks, for bringing a difficult blend of pathos and recalcitrant power to the unprepossessing bulimic teenager Nicola in *Life Is Sweet*.

Runner-Up: Jennifer Jason Leigh, who never gives the same performance twice, for her muted terror in the role of an addicted narc in Lili Fini Zanuck's *Rush*.



Grand Canyon

The "Margaret Thatcher" Award goes to Dustin Hoffman for his sterling performance in the title role of Steven Spielberg's *Hook*. Though Hoffman told the press he patterned the peevish pirate after William F. Buckley, Jr., we know he's really the Iron Lady: who else could be the model for that scornfully curled lip, that toffee-nosed falsetto, that radar for the jugular of all creatures powerless and oppressed?

The "Hungarian Ishtar" Award goes to István Szabó for *Meeting Venus*, an adorable muddle of a film that tries to weld Wagner's *Tannhäuser* to a rambling meditation on the new post-glasnost, post-unification, multicultural Europe, and fashion it all into a romantic comedy with Glenn Close as a Swedish diva lip-synching Kiri Te Kanawa. What, no kitchen sink?

The "Big Chiller" Award goes to Lawrence Kasdan (*Grand Canyon*) for making racial strife, poverty, and homelessness in Los Angeles look like a malicious conspiracy to ruin Kevin Kline's day.

The "Ethics in Psychiatry" Award, to Barbra Streisand (*The Prince of Tides*) for her portrayal of a shrink whose clinical skills include throwing a dictionary at Nick Nolte and engaging him in carnal interchange by a roaring fire—an experience they both find so curative that, in the interest of our nation's mental health, it should undoubtedly become mandatory psychiatric practice.

And finally, the **"Words Fail Me" Award** goes to Jeffrey Kanew's *V.I. Warshawski* for ruining Sara Paretsky's magnificent crusading female private detective and reducing poor Kathleen Turner to a gun-toting, sex-kitten cartoon. She's not so bad—she's just drawn that way.

Ella Taylor is a film critic for L.A. Weekly.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

by Matthew Gurewitsch

BRAVE NEW WORLDS

On the face of it, there are few conductors less similar than Frans Brüggen and Simon Rattle. Brüggen came to the podium after a first career as a soloist on the recorder. Rattle picked up the baton while still in his teens. Brüggen leads his own ensemble of specialists, the Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century. Rattle was hired by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, formerly of no great fame, and takes the entire symphonic literature as his province, contemporary fare most emphatically included.

But in successive American tours this spring, the two maestros are showing a shared fascination with compositions that push the boundaries of established forms.



Frans Brüggen

At Lincoln Center (March 15) Brüggen and his players breach their self-imposed time barrier to investigate Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 (1811-12) and Schubert's Symphony No. 9 (1828), surely with ears and minds intent on reclaiming the works' full iconoclastic force. Other stops on their schedule this month are San Francisco, Los Angeles, Durham, Morrow (south of Atlanta), Boston, Princeton, Cleveland, and Toronto. Or hear their vibrant recordings, most of them live, and sounding it, on the Philips label.

Rattle's programs are devoted entirely to works from the dawn of our century, when the world was moving bravely into the aesthetic future: Carl Nielsen's *Sinfonia Espansiva*, Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, Debussy's *Images*, of course Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du Printemps*, and more. Next month, the complete array is scheduled for concerts in Boston, New York (Carnegie Hall), Los Angeles, and San Francisco; selections are scheduled for New Haven, Brookville (New York), Washington, D.C., and Irvine. (For more information call 212-581-5197.) Many of the same pieces also figure in Rattle's splendid discography with the CBSO on Angel/EMI.

SOME FOR THE RECORD

Now that James Levine has the Metropolitan Opera making recordings again, it is entertaining to compare casts in the theater with casts on the discs. This spring, the opportunity arises with two of Levine's signature pieces. Verdi's somber *Don Carlo* comes both to Lincoln Center and to the recording studios. For the recording on Sony Classical, bass Samuel Ramey, who appears live as the iron-fisted King Philip (in all performances except on March 2), takes over the brief, forbidding role of the Grand Inquisitor—a stroke of deluxe casting scarcely conceivable in the opera house. (In the near future, he is to record Philip for Angel/EMI with Riccardo Muti at La Scala.) Vladimir Chernov, the Verdi baritone the world has been waiting for, is set for the self-sacrificing Rodrigo on the



Parsifal at the Metropolitan Opera

recording and in scattered live performances (March 5, 11, 14, and 23, the last, however, without Levine).

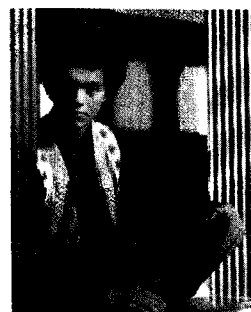
Wagner's *Parsifal*, awaiting release on Deutsche Grammophon with last year's principals Plácido Domingo and Jessye Norman, returns to the Met stage on March 12 with artists far more suitable:

Siegfried Jerusalem and Waltraud Meier (the leads, as it happens, on a new recording under Daniel Barenboim on Teldec). For Levine and Meier, this is a rematch; they recorded Wagner's last mystery of abnegation and spiritual redemption together, both of them for the first time and excellently, at the 1985 Wagner Festival in Bayreuth (Philips). And yet another cast of some promise (Deborah Polaski, Gary Lakes) takes over for the Met *Parsifal* performances in April.

COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT SOLOISTS

Art is never more eloquent than in times of crisis. In the Soviet twilight, as the "Evil Empire" of dark memory began to tremble and then came crashing down, the appearance in the West of some extraordinary musicians bore striking witness to a flourishing of the spirit despite decades of repression. What fate will these artists choose now, if in fact the choice is theirs? No doubt their compatriots need the message of their music; and so do we.

Among the instrumentalists, none shines brighter than the pianist Evgeny Kissin, a solemn-looking lad who has now turned 20. It is tempting to dwell on details of his virtuosity—his glittering exactitude, his resplendent ease, the bloom, the songfulness, the cushioned amplitude of his phrasing—but the simple truth is that whatever the music, his playing makes one deeply happy. His recordings on RCA Victor Red Seal and Deutsche Grammophon (some live, some from the studio) are treasurable souvenirs, but the great thing is to hear him live. This month, he plays Shostakovich with the Philadelphia Orchestra (in Philadelphia and at Carnegie Hall) and Beethoven with the Chicago Symphony.



Evgeny Kissin

In striking contrast, yet no less remarkable, is the violinist Yuri Bashmet. In his hands, an instrument that too often seems the glum sister of that enchantress the violin stands revealed in soulful, austere radiance. He will be heard this month with the Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal in William Walton's moodily romantic viola concerto, one of the most arresting in a sparse field (Carnegie Hall, March 28). His recordings—not yet numerous, mostly in unfamiliar repertoire, but each one a spellbinder—are on RCA Victor Red Seal.



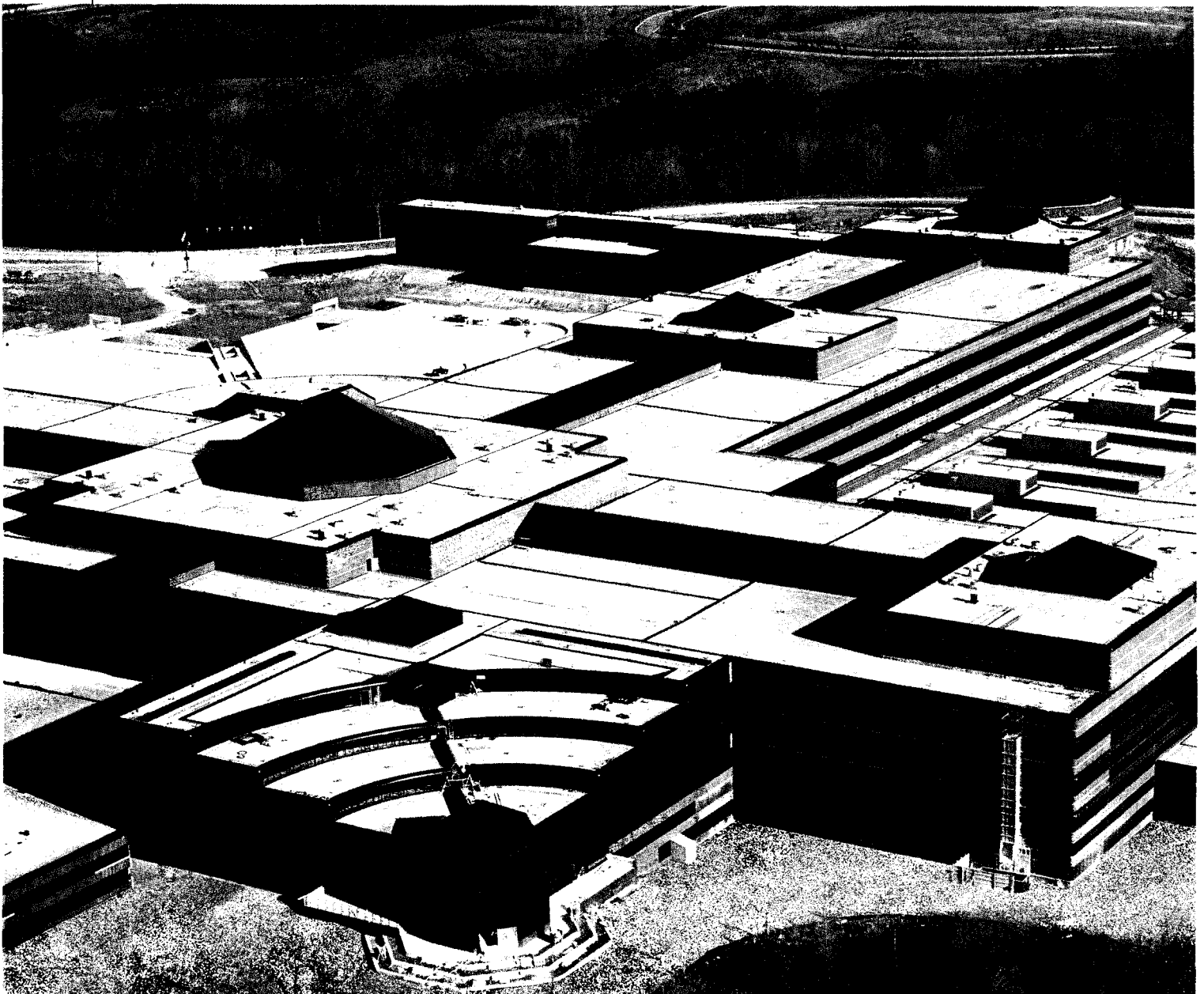
Yuri Bashmet

Matthew Gurewitsch is a writer who lives in New York.

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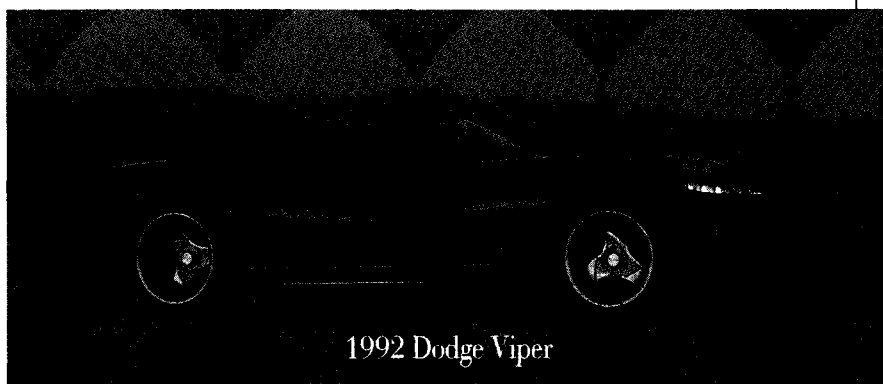
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POPULAR MUSIC

by Charles M. Young

MARX AND LENNON

My vote for most idiosyncratic rock band in the world goes to Laibach, the musical wing of Neue Slowenische Kunst, a Slovenian art collective dedicated to "conscious abandonment of personal taste, judgments, convictions; voluntary depersonalization, the willing adoption of ideology and unmasking and recapitulation of the regime 'postmodern.'" In other



Laibach

words, as the rest of the world explores democracy, NSK has adapted "retro-garde" totalitarian hierarchy for an organization that uses the words, sounds, and images of Hitler and Stalin as folk art.

Is this satire? Is this a serious cult? Are they snobs or vulgarians? Who knows? All I can tell you is that Laibach's two albums—*Sympathy for the Devil* and *Let It Be* (Mute)—cover songs by the Rolling Stones and Beatles with astoundingly Wagnerian pomposity. It is truly totalitarian rock and roll, surprisingly melodic and listenable, and it makes me laugh out loud.

I've wanted an explanation for these guys for years, and now I have one in the book *Neue Slowenische Kunst* (Amok Books, Los Angeles, 800-374-AMOK). Like their music, NSK's words have power in their pomposity: "Laibach practices provocation on the revolted state of the alienated consciousness (which must necessarily find itself an enemy) and unites warriors and opponents into an expression of a static totalitarian scream." I still can't believe they're serious, but their paintings do make me shiver. Their all-for-one membership rules also make me shiver. And I'm looking forward to their next album, *Kapital* (also Mute), scheduled for release next month.

WISE MAN IN BLACK

The next classic box set is *The Essential Johnny Cash (1955–1983)*, consisting of three CDs or tapes and a biographical essay. Contrary to the image held by some Yankees that country singers are hicks, Cash is well-read, sensitive, and interested in ideas. Having prevailed through drug addiction, divorce, parenthood, religious conversion, and all the travails of being on the road for nearly 40 years, he has arrived at something that can only be called wisdom. The Man in Black wears the archetype of the benevolent grandfather of Nashville like a pair of black stovepipe Levis.

The odd thing about Cash, however, is that he seems to have started off wise. Whether singing the most primitive and exhilarating rockabilly in his early Sun sessions (where Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, and Jerry Lee Lewis also first recorded) or the slick string arrangements of the late sixties or the neo-rockabilly of the early eighties, he sounds exactly like Johnny Cash. He had his style from day one. His warm, quavering baritone seems to promise meaning and compassion whatever personal hell you may be slogging through. Especially not to be missed are his live concerts at Folsom Prison and San Quentin Prison, which reveal a communication between performer and audience of almost unbearable intensity. Somehow it just makes sense that Johnny Cash was the only guy hip enough during the sixties to hang with both Bob Dylan and Richard Nixon.



Cash in 1964

SWEET THINGS



The Sugarcubes

The anomalously named Sugarcubes play a variety of guitar-based rock that sounds as if it ought to be pop but keeps veering off into metaphysical distress—sort of like the Ronettes crossed with Jean Paul Sartre. Alternating sweet melodies with bleak dissonance in complicated arrangements, they create a musical landscape reminiscent of the violent and beautiful countryside in their native Iceland.

Co-lead singers Bjork Gudmundsottir and Einar Orn, a woman of 26 and a man of 29, respectively, seem to argue most of their lyrics on *Stick Around for Joy* (Elektra), their third and best album. The bleak state of communication between the sexes ("You love him, you want to make him happy/ He loves you, he wants to humiliate you") rates as the big concern on songs like "Leash Called Love" and "Hetero Scum." But if you stick around long enough, the joy pops through on tunes like "Happy Nurse." The Sugarcubes should be a hit on college radio and with the right video could score on the pop charts as well. The group is planning a tour for April or May.

Charles M. Young is a contributing editor of *Musician* magazine.



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For a chance to win a free year's subscription to the network's journal, the *Arts & Entertainment Magazine & Program Guide*, respond to the poll on the card in this section. One hundred winners will be drawn from all cards postmarked by March 31.

(Continued from page 28)

other companies for asbestos claims has gone for legal fees.

The blame for these results lies with Congress and the President, not the courts. The political process failed to reconcile broad rights with scarce resources—one of its fundamental tasks. And the problem is only getting worse. Manville's backlog of claims totals 160,000 and is growing rapidly. Unresolved claims are worth something like \$6 billion. The total number of asbestos cases filed in federal court in 1990 was one third the number of all federal criminal cases. A committee of federal judges reported last March that asbestos litigation is becoming "a disaster of major proportions to both the victims and the producers of asbestos products."

The sleeping giant among liability issues that are headed for bankruptcy court is a sweeping congressional requirement that companies pay to clean up hazardous wastes they had a hand in creating. The present trickle of cases could become a deluge as federal authorities work their way down a list of the 2,000 sites that pose the greatest health threats; their cost is estimated at an average of \$26 million a site. Created by the Superfund law of 1980, this obligation could stall companies in bankruptcy court for years, because Congress failed to face squarely the question of whether environmental cleanup costs should upstage other worthy claims.

Buying social progress on credit became an unhealthy habit in the 1970s. By avoiding the tough question of whether pensions should be paid before other debts, Congress handed over another vast social problem to the bankruptcy courts. The government began insuring private plans in 1974 to see that pension promises made by employers were kept. The law also made it harder for companies to cancel or change pension plans. The government agency that insures the plans of 40 million workers, the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, as a last resort pays pensions to retirees using a fund created by premiums from each participating company.

In bankruptcy court, confusion about pension obligations has become a wild card. LTV first tried to use the card to disclaim responsibility for its pension plans. In the fall of 1986, having de-

clared bankruptcy while facing \$2.5 billion in unfunded pension liabilities, the company informed the government that it would stop contributing to its pension plans, prompting the PBGC to take them over to assure that retirees would be paid. But the PBGC played its own card, to protect taxpayers. The agency returned the plans to the company in September of 1987, arguing that pensions should be paid before suppliers and other creditors, an action approved by the Supreme Court in 1990. Then LTV won a round in court last September, when a district judge sent PBGC to join other unsecured creditors at the end of the line. PBGC countered in November by proposing legislation to get a better place. Had Congress simply said that promised retirement benefits should be paid before other unsecured creditors—probably the right decision—LTV could have straightened out its pension problems. Because Congress didn't, after five years and \$145 million in fees the company is not revived, retired workers cannot count on their pensions, and creditors have not been paid. Worse, healthy companies have good reason not to start any defined-benefit plans, which employees like. Their PBGC premium per employee has risen from \$1 to \$19, and half now subsidizes the plans of sick companies.

These problems will not go away. The government has only gradually realized that it faces hidden liabilities of \$40 billion for other plans that are underfunded. Last year the PBGC ran a deficit of more than \$2 billion, double that of 1989, and it is fighting hard not to become the next federal bailout. A number of companies with huge pension liabilities are in bankruptcy court. In the airline industry alone, Pan Am folded with more than \$900 million in pension liabilities, and Continental and Eastern's liabilities of \$840 million are their biggest debt.

IF BANKRUPTCY'S second chance offers big businesses and government opportunities for evasion, it offers small businesses false hope. Thousands of small businesses try to reorganize each year. Almost none succeed. Their creditors lose too. Suppliers and customers who are owed money usually get nothing. A special study by the federal courts in 1989 concluded that out of every 100 small businesses (as-

sets under \$100,000) that try to reorganize, only about seven end up with a court-approved plan. No one knows how many plans actually work. For businesses with less than \$1 million in assets, the odds are still terrible. Only one in five actually gets a second chance, and many that do ultimately fail. It matters that reorganization doesn't work for small businesses: about 70 percent of all businesses trying to reorganize have less than \$1 million in assets.

What happens to the ones that don't make it? Often they remain in court for years. Creditors rarely have enough at stake to spend time and money moving a small case forward. Eventually assets are depleted by futile efforts to keep the business going and by lawyers' and accountants' fees, and the business is liquidated.

For businesses of no lasting value, Chapter 11 offers a wasteful temptation. Terminal optimism or bad legal advice leads poorly conceived or badly managed firms to try to reorganize when they should simply liquidate. "The reason that so many small businesses cannot make Chapter 11 work is simply that they do not have enough assets and credibility remaining to make a go of it," Leonard Rosen, of the National Bankruptcy Conference, says.

Costs and delays also help create a double standard that favors big businesses over small ones, despite the law's even-handed intent. Reorganization "can be too expensive for small businesses," says Harry Dixon, the chairman of the American Bankruptcy Institute, a nonprofit organization that tracks bankruptcy developments. Lawyers and accountants charge \$100 to \$500 an hour and like to be paid right away. Often they require a retainer in advance. Even a fairly simple case can cost \$100,000.

Delays can be fatal to small businesses. Businesses that try to reorganize spend an average of two years in bankruptcy court. "The business closes down," Dixon says. "It can't get credit. It can't get products. It can't get anything."

Getting credit is critical. Ironically, bankruptcy offers a second chance only to firms with access to money. "I always say that bankruptcy is not for bankrupts," says Harvey A. Miller, a New York lawyer who has been advising bankrupt firms for thirty years. "If

Why reforming our liability America is to succeed

EXCESSIVE LIABILITY AWARDS MAKE IT TOUGH FOR U.S. COMPANIES TO COMPETE.

We are a compassionate society. We want to compensate those who have suffered.

But when our courts expand the traditional concepts of liability, causing defendants to pay excessive compensation, we add to the costs we all pay for goods and services. We encourage companies to stop research and development on new products. And we even make it harder for American companies to compete overseas.

PAYING A HIDDEN TAX.

In reality, the American system of liability has become the source of a hidden tax on our economy—a tax that can account for as much as 50% of the price paid for a product.

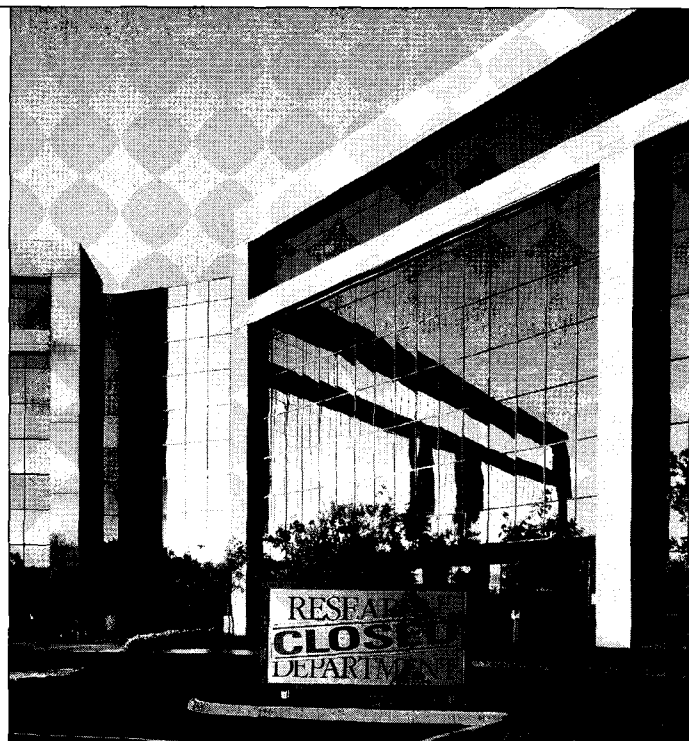
What's worse, it has been estimated that this hidden tax amounts to \$80 billion a year—a sum equal to the combined profits of the nation's 200 largest corporations.

Our economic competitors' legal systems do not encourage litigation to the extent we do. Consider, for example, that there are 30 times more lawsuits per capita in the U.S. than in Japan.

Is it any wonder that America is having a tough time competing in overseas markets?

UNCERTAINTY STIFLES ENTERPRISE.

The unpredictability of our liability system is also enormously costly to American competitiveness. For example, in a recent survey of CEOs, the Conference Board found that worry about potential liability lawsuits caused 47% of firms surveyed to discontinue one or more product lines. What's more, 25% stopped certain product research and development, and 39% decided



against coming out with a new product. Meanwhile, our overseas competitors continue to research and develop new products at an ever-increasing pace.

ARE WE CONTROLLING RISKS OR INCREASING THEM?

When we give a drunk driver the right to sue an automaker or highway engineer for a million dollars after a crash, are we controlling risk?

Or just encouraging risky and careless behavior?

If you are a manufacturer, you can be sued even if your product has state-of-the-art safety features. Even if your customer misused it against your instructions. Even if the risks of misuse were obvious.

When fear of lawsuits causes physicians to limit

ity system is essential if in overseas markets.

services to patients—or worse, to abandon their practice altogether—lack of adequate treatment means greater risks for everyone.

Is this controlling risk or increasing it?

It's an unhealthy and dangerous situation that needs correcting.

WE MUST REFORM OUR "DEEP POCKETS" APPROACH TO LIABILITY.

Specifically, we need to change our approach and base liability suits on fault.

Our current system often encourages the frivolous suing of those with the ability to pay—in other words, those with "deep pockets." But does it make sense to hold such parties entirely liable, even if they were only minimally at fault?

A MORE RATIONAL APPROACH.

Those who suffer economic losses because of another's negligence should be fairly reimbursed. No one could argue with this principle. There should also be just compensation for pain and suffering resulting from real and severe injuries.

But can we afford to continue a system that encourages litigation and financial judgments bearing little direct relationship to fault or to the actual cost of injuries suffered?

Clearly, a better approach is needed.

CONGRESS HAS A ROLE.

Legislation providing a uniform product liability standard would allow American companies to compete without the burdens of excessive liability risks. And this would unclog the courts and put American business in a stronger position as barriers to international trade and investment fall.

There is proposed legislation before Congress

dealing with these issues. A solution to the liability crisis is vital to American competitiveness, and Congress can play a role in restoring the right balance.

SO DO THE COURTS.

When all is said and done, our courts are the interpreters of our laws and our values. It's our values as a society that count, especially as reflected in the courts and individual jury decisions.

Together our legislative and judicial branches must recognize the damage being done to American competitiveness from the current liability system. And help America restore the proper balance.

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Perhaps you'll want to keep the ball rolling by contacting your elected officials—judges and legislators—with your own views.

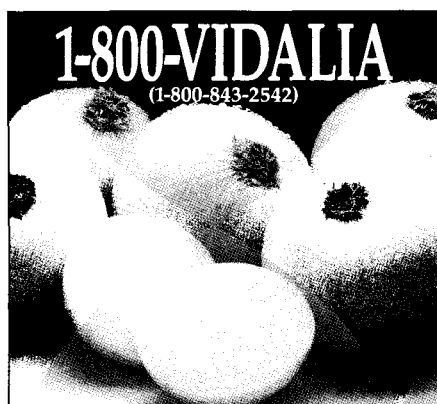
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you want to use Chapter Eleven to reorganize a business, you have to have a war chest. You've got to have some money available to you immediately." It costs money to reassure employees, customers, and suppliers that the business is a going concern. It costs money to hire lawyers and accountants.

Small businesses don't owe enough money to get credit. "If you owe the bank a hundred thousand dollars, you are in deep trouble," Dixon explains. "If you owe the bank ten million, the bank is in deep trouble. The bigger the case, the better the chance that you're going to make it, because people have way too much invested for you not to."

Small-business reorganizations "need not take forever," A. Thomas Small, a federal bankruptcy judge in Raleigh, North Carolina, wrote in a recent report. Bankruptcy courts managed to handle thousands of family-farm reorganizations in the mid-1980s quickly and cheaply, by simplifying the rules. To prove his point, Small has invented a fast track for small-business reorganizations in his district. Plans have to be filed quickly, paperwork is simplified, and cases take an average of seven months. The experiment has received good initial reviews from debtors and creditors and may provide an example of how the system could be changed nationally. A bill introduced in November by Senator Howell Heflin, of Alabama, and Senator Charles Grassley, of Iowa, would try it out in a few more districts.

Similar changes are occurring for individuals, who file under separate legal provisions, for similar reasons. The number of people seeking a fresh start has tripled since 1984, to nearly 900,000 in 1991. When population growth is taken into account, four times as many people declared bankruptcy in the past ten years as did so during the years of the Depression. Bankruptcy, which is much more widely accepted today, is providing a needed port for many families weathering economic storms. Once the ruinous last resort of the laid-off factory worker and the family stricken by sudden illness, bankruptcy has become a way for doctors and lawyers, as well, to reorder their personal finances. But personal bankruptcy, like business bankruptcy, can offer false hope that a fresh start will be easy, and has proved too amenable to exploitation.

TO SOME EXTENT companies have learned from experience.

Anticipating the need to declare bankruptcy, some firms try to cobble informal agreements with their major creditors. They then make a quick trip to court, using Chapter 11 to bring any holdouts into line. Southland Corporation, the owner of 7-Eleven stores, is the most successful example to date of such "prepackaged" bankruptcies. But this technique has limits. Southland was aided by the infusion of \$430 million from Japanese investors, who bought 70 percent of the company. Companies with thousands of increasingly aggressive creditors will find it hard to forge agreements.

Fundamental problems remain. Bankruptcy becomes a kind of evasion when firms, some of them still profitable, attempt to avoid obligations that are merely inconvenient. Reorganization becomes a Kafkaesque nightmare when impossibly complex business problems meet costly and bureaucratic court procedures. The orderly line of creditors becomes an angry crowd when new kinds of claims are not ranked. As practiced in the 1990s, bankruptcy has lost touch with its central purpose: to provide a fair and predictable way of deciding who should bear the loss when a business fails. Bankruptcy laws are not supposed to prevent failure, which gives essential discipline to the market economy. Nor should they lower the cost of failure to the point that managers are encouraged to take foolish risks.

Workable approaches are beginning to emerge and need to be brought forward in public debate.

- Everyone needs to ask the hard questions: Is this business worth saving? and What will it cost to save it? Because of the inevitable temptations of the quick fix, these will go unasked unless the law requires an objective assessment at the beginning of the bankruptcy process to decide if the business is viable. Such a requirement has recently been adopted in Great Britain, where it is carried out by specially trained independent accountants.

- Because it tampers with the intricate web of promises between debtor and creditor and between employer and employee, bankruptcy should be returned to its traditional role of last resort.

- To restore balance, creditors should

My Rock Of Gibraltar.



He looked like a young George Burns. That's what all the girls used to say. He actually used to call me Gracie. When he was shipped overseas he wrote twice a week. He sent letters from Germany and Paris, and once he even sent one from the front lines. I think he's written more meaningful words on paper with that Cross pen than he's ever said to me in person. He still uses the same pen, and always jokes that it will last longer than he will. But I bought him a new Cross ball-point pen, I want to save the old one for myself. It reminds me of the time when I received a bunch of letters addressed to a girl he called Gracie.

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have a simpler way to remove managers responsible for failure, and there should be a real limit—perhaps six months—on how long managers have an exclusive right to propose reorganization plans.

- It is by now clear to everyone, even many lawyers, that the time-clock approach to compensating professionals is wasteful. Suggested alternatives include negotiated flat fees and fees based at least partly on results. An easy way to reduce costs would be to cut down on the number of lawyers, accountants, and investment bankers involved in each case. The idea that reorganization will ever be cheap, however, is an illusion. The great expense is in part also a political choice that should be re-examined. Congress intended to encourage negotiation; negotiation with a cast of hundreds takes years and is very, very expensive.

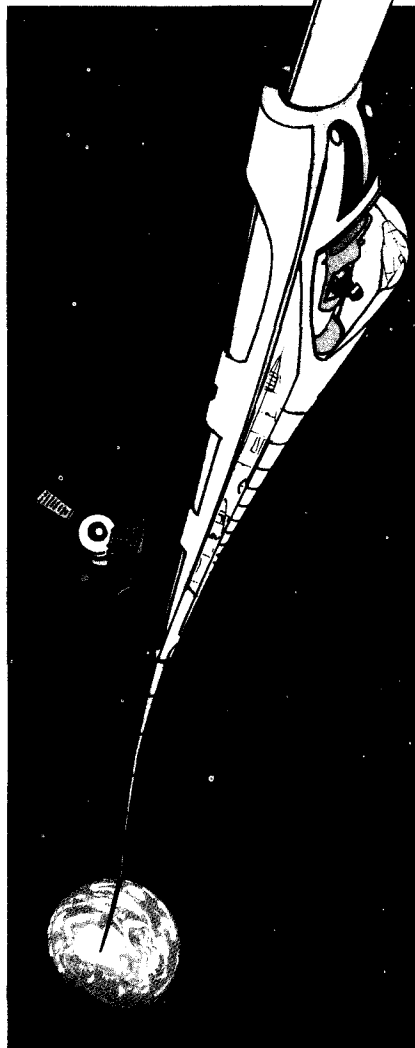
- Congress should require companies to fully fund pension plans, and should design a fair way of compensating people injured by corporate misdeeds. Two huge problems would thus return to the political process, where they belong.

- Bankruptcy laws have always given priority to claims that legislators deem to have special merit. The list needs to be updated to reflect the complex corporate obligations of the 1990s, including pensions, health and safety provisions, and environmental clean-up. This will require the courage to rank worthy claimants—a quality our politicians are not known for. For every arguably needed clarification, a special-interest group is waiting to improve its own lot.

- Finally, in order to give them a fair chance to reorganize, small businesses need a separate track that is quicker and cheaper.

IT IS UNLIKELY that a strong leader will stand up in Congress and volunteer to orchestrate revisions that restore trust in bankruptcy laws, despite recent calls for a new congressional commission by the American Bankruptcy Institute. In political terms this would be a thankless task. It crosses too many boundaries, exposing federal departments and congressional committees as the fiefdoms they sometimes are. And yet, considering that the American dream and its antithesis are inevitably linked, what will happen if bankruptcy's inequities are ignored?

—Mary Graham



TECHNOLOGY

Stairways to Heaven

Since rockets will never be a cheap or efficient way to lift payloads into space, alternative—and highly speculative—technologies are being studied

ALL EXISTING space vehicles, including the most advanced SDI launch systems and the renovated Space Shuttle, rely on a principle more than 800 years old. Whereas aviation has progressed over the centuries from hot-air balloons to propeller- and jet-driven engines, and now stands on the verge of further breakthroughs, spacecraft are all driven by rocketry,

embodying techniques that, although refined, date from the invention by the Chinese of powder-propelled fire arrows, in the twelfth century.

Although the principle of rocketry—essentially Newton's third law, on action and reaction—is elegant in its simplicity, it sets an upper limit on the efficiency and performance of rocket engines. A rocket can neither derive its motive power from the medium it moves through, like a clipper ship, nor refuel during its journey, like a bomber. The fuel that a rocket-powered spacecraft requires for the final part of its ascent must be carried throughout the journey. The Space Shuttle is more than 90 percent propellant by weight as it sits on the launch pad; the percentage for vehicles capable of reaching higher orbits or other planets is even greater.

Although propellant is not a major factor in the cost of the space program—the four million pounds burned in a typical shuttle mission account for less than two percent of the launch's cost—its enormous consumption demonstrates that the physics of rocketry relies on brute force. Aircraft employ the earth's atmosphere, using it for lift and taking advantage of its winds; rockets simply punch through it. Greater efficiency comes from more-dangerous propellants or higher burn temperatures, which require highly advanced engines with relatively short working lifetimes.

Thousands of engineers and technicians are required to maintain the complex shuttle, an expensive burden that would only increase with an expansion of the shuttle program. And, as the *Challenger* disaster showed, a rocket, however complex its computerized regulatory systems, is essentially a space capsule sitting atop an enormous bomb, which is merely burned slowly rather than detonated all at once.

The exhaust from solid-fuel rockets leads to the formation of acid rain, while some liquid-fuel rockets, like the Space Shuttle, contribute to global warming. Although the warming effected by the shuttle on its current restricted launch schedule is minuscule compared with, say, rain-forest burning in Brazil, an ambitious space program, like the one NASA envisioned in the mid-1960s, might eventually pose significant problems, especially if other nations began similar programs.

All these factors have persuaded a

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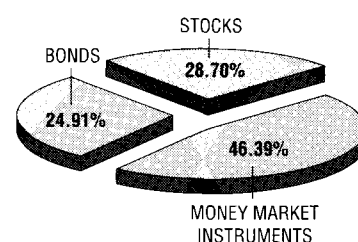
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It was only 2:00 PM and Keith Heavenridge already knew the rest of his day wasn't going to turn out like he had planned. Heavenridge was already late for a 1:45 meeting. Leaving his office, he saw that his car was blocked by his wife's Volvo.

"I have to admit I was a little annoyed at the time," he recalls. "Instead of waiting for her to move it, I decided to take the Volvo."

This action would take on greater meaning thirty-five minutes later. Because as Keith was turning onto Sunset Boulevard, a twisting, turning, four-lane highway with no median to separate traffic, another car came flying around a blind turn and, crossing four lanes and speed bumps, lost complete control, hitting the Heavenridge Volvo GLE wagon head on.

"I don't even think I took my foot off of the gas," says Heavenridge. "He came out of nowhere. All I remember is this crunching feeling to the very core of my body."

"I went down to the impound where the tow truck had taken the car after the accident," Cecily Heavenridge remembers, "and when I got to the car, I couldn't believe it. My stomach got all knotted. I mean there was nothing left of the front of the car. Nothing. It was crunched right up to where Keith was sitting."

"I know in my heart I would have been a widow raising three kids if he had not been driving my car that day."

"The front of the car collapsed like an accordion just like I had read it would," Keith Heavenridge says. "The air bag went off. The first few moments I just sat there, doing an inventory of my condition. I was a little shaken up, my wrist hurt from banging the windshield, but that's about it. I then opened the door, got out and walked over to check on the other driver."

Beginning with Volvo's unique safety cage construction developed in 1944, to crumple zones and child safety innovations, to today, on 700 and 900 series cars, a side impact protection system years ahead of government requirements, Volvo design engineers have introduced 47 new safety

features to their vehicles in almost as many years.

"An experience like this teaches you that you can be the safest driver in the world and because someone else is not paying attention or because of the circumstances at a given point in time, you can get into an accident," Heavenridge says.

There are 34,000,000 accidents each year in this country and over 40,000 deaths. To look at these statistics is at the same time frightening and deceiving. Because at a distance, numbers become anonymous and accidents only happen to "other people."

Keith Heavenridge knows how false this sense of security can be. As he stands by Sunset Boulevard recounting his accident, another one almost takes place. Tires screech. Horns blare.

He just shakes his head and walks away.

Each year, the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety studies the occupant death rates in thousands of accidents.* In its April 1991 study of 1984-88 models, the car with the lowest fatality rate was the Volvo 240 wagon. Each year IIHS has been analyzing accident statistics, Volvo has been at the top or near the top in their respective model categories. No car manufacturer can guarantee you will survive an accident. No company can say you won't have an injury. But statistics show and crash tests demonstrate that some cars can offer more protection than others.

"I thought of how close we had come with Keith's accident to being alone," Cecily Heavenridge says. "I never want to be in that position again. Since then, we've bought two more Volvos."

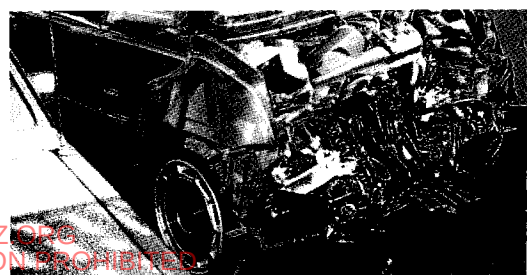
There are certain moments in your life when your entire world becomes crystal clear. When all your priorities are in order. For Keith Heavenridge, that moment came on January 3, 1990 at 2:35 PM.

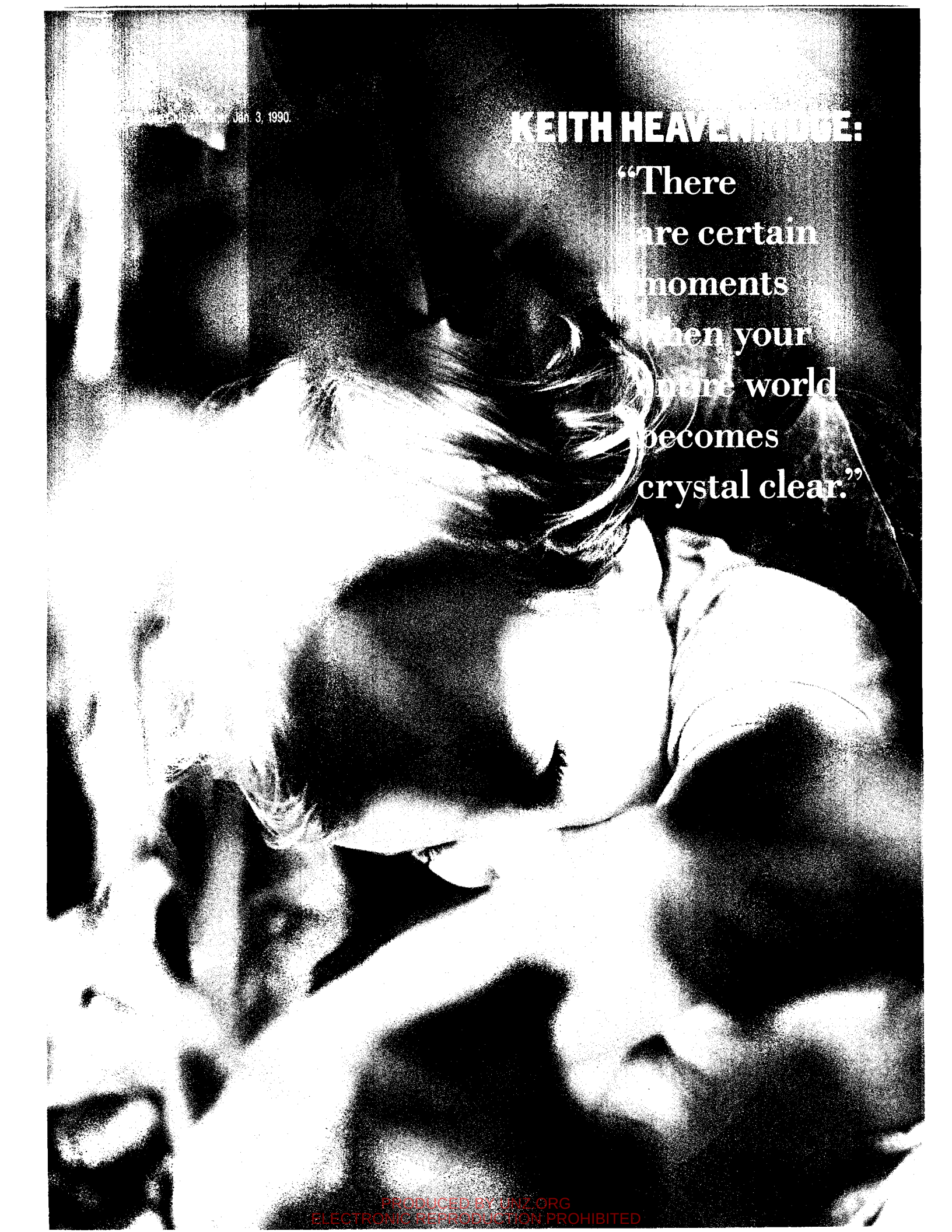
It is now almost two years later. Keith Heavenridge is having his picture taken for this advertisement. In another room in his house, his son, David, nine years old, picks up a photo taken of his father's crumpled Volvo after the crash.

"My dad was in this car."

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*The work that we do, all original, too,
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For the greatest enjoyment of all.*

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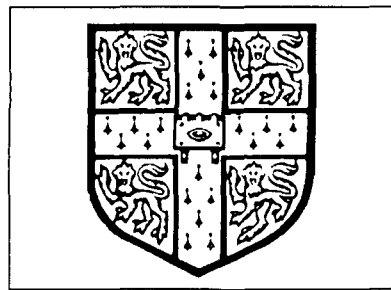
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growing number of scientists that if humanity is going to establish vacuum and zero-gravity industries in space, or build large-scale facilities in orbit, a revolution in the means for lifting payloads into space must be achieved.

IN 1960 A SOVIET engineer named Y. N. Artsutanov published an article detailing how emerging technology could produce a previously unconsidered means of lifting objects into orbit. Artsutanov noted that at a distance of 22,400 miles a satellite takes exactly twenty-four hours to circle Earth. But because its "geostationary" orbit corresponds to Earth's own period of rotation, an object orbiting over the Equator at this height would remain fixed over one spot. Artsutanov boldly imagined such a satellite lowering a cable to Earth, where it would be anchored in place. If a counterweight was extruded in the opposite direction, such a system would be dynamically stable, maintaining itself without expenditure of energy. The cable would serve as a "space elevator" climbing into the sky.

Artsutanov imagined such a cable system—or "heavenly funicular," as he called it—hauling 12,000 tons of payload a day into orbit. Once the cable system was completed, the cost of lifting payloads would be measurable in terms of electricity expended, or about a dollar per pound. Such a structure would be so huge at its base that it would be invulnerable to natural or human assault. An airplane or other man-made object would, however, be demolished if it crashed into the structure.

Artsutanov published his speculations in a Communist youth magazine rather than in a scientific journal, and his concept went largely unseen by scientists. In the following fifteen years it was independently reinvented several times, once by a team of oceanographers engaged in lowering long cables to the bottom of the sea. By the late seventies the concept of a space elevator—called variously a skyhook, a beanstalk, an orbital tower, and an anchored satellite—had appeared in science-fiction novels, and was widely disseminated among research scientists, university brainstormers, and advocates for the development of the space industry and permanent orbital habitats. Although NASA engineers have expressed varying degrees of

skepticism, a number of scientists now believe that only technical hurdles stand in the way of the construction of a space elevator in the next fifty years, and that a working model, though very expensive to install, would soon render Earth-to-orbit rockets obsolete.

The limiting factor for the space elevator is cable strength. In 1960 the strongest existing industrial material was capable of supporting about a 120-mile length of itself hanging in Earth's gravity. Because gravity is slightly reduced 120 miles above Earth, though, a greater length of such a cable could hang suspended. Tapering the cable, so that the center of mass (which would bear the weight of the full extent of the cable) was far thicker, would allow still longer lengths. Materials developed since have strength-to-weight ratios that are closer to those necessary to sustain a heavily tapered cable for the full 22,400 miles. Charles Sheffield, a former president of the American Astronautical Society, believes that a small working model—with a cable perhaps microscopically thin by the time it reached Earth's surface—could be in place within thirty years.

Robert L. Forward, formerly of Hughes Research Laboratories and now a consultant and writer, envisions a space cable made of graphite "whisker," which has a higher ratio of tensile strength to density than any substance existing outside laboratory conditions. A whisker is a thin filament of crystal several millimeters long, which can possess exceptional tensile strength. Industrial graphite fiber, used in tennis rackets and fishing rods, has a higher strength for its weight than any metal, but graphite whisker cannot yet be used in greater lengths while maintaining its full strength. However, brand-new materials that use filaments of carbon atoms arranged like a spiral staircase foreshadow greatly increased material strength in coming years.

A skyhook made of graphite whisker would need to be at least a hundred times as thick at the center of mass as at the Earthward end, which in Forward's design would measure one millimeter across. This would be strong enough to lift two tons. Its lifting capacity would first be used to hoist more cable into place, allowing it to grow progressively larger and more durable, like a thickening stalactite. Ultimately the skyhook would comprise either a

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series of independent cables, on which trains would run like vertical monorails, or a rim of cables forming a hollow structure, inside which electrified tracks could be built.

But thousands of tons of highly engineered graphite whisker would have to be put into orbit 22,400 miles above Earth, far higher than any shuttle has gone. Unless builders are willing to consider making thousands of shuttle launches, enough raw material to provide such a tonnage of refined carbon would have to be found in space.

One plan involves diverting a small asteroid into high orbit around Earth. Space-industry enthusiasts speak of entrepreneurs venturing out to locate a carbon-rich asteroid the size of a small mountain and nudging it into the desired orbit with controlled nuclear explosions. Forward speculates that "a new breed of wildcatter" might come into being—high-risk companies that would supply orbital engineering projects with millions of tons of nickel-iron or carbon from diverted asteroids. (The history of companies doing business with the government suggests much less romantic prospects, but NASA might contract with some aerospace giant, with the usual guarantees for cost overruns, to provide this service.)

VARIANTS of the skyhook could be built more easily. One design, developed by Hans Moravec, of Carnegie Mellon University, has been called a nonsynchronous skyhook. It is essentially a tether 5,300 miles long, set spinning about its midpoint, which would orbit Earth at a height of 2,600 miles once every three hours. Such a device can be envisioned as two opposite spokes of an imaginary ferris wheel rolling over the surface of the earth.

The tether would spin at a rate of one revolution every two hours, so that three times during each orbit one of its ends would sweep down into Earth's atmosphere. At the lowest point of the swing—perhaps a few miles above the surface—supersonic aircraft could dock with the end in the way that jets dock to refuel in flight. The payload would be transferred to the tether in a minute or two, and it would then be swept up into space like the end of a bola.

NASA is already planning to use a short tether to lift a satellite to a new orbit. A shuttle mission scheduled for this summer will deploy a satellite upward—that is, away from Earth—on a tether twelve miles long and then reel it back in like a fishing lure. On a subsequent mission astronauts will lower a satellite on a sixty-two-mile tether to probe regions of the atmosphere that are too high for aircraft but too low to sustain an object in orbit.

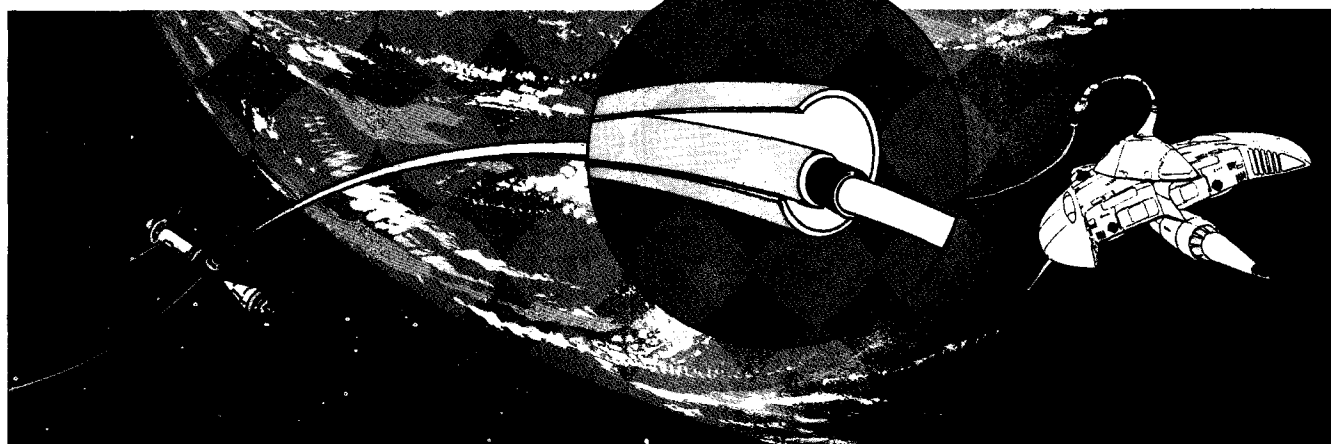
Ivan Bekey, of the NASA Office of Space Flight, sees this system as the forerunner of free-spinning tethers that could lift satellites or spacecraft from low orbits into higher ones or vice versa, and even fling them toward the Moon or Mars. "Once you start dipping into the atmosphere, things get difficult very rapidly," he warns. "But rotating tethers in orbits outside the atmosphere make an enormous amount of sense."

Forward and Bekey both note that a skyhook could be built in orbit around the Moon using currently available materials. In the lower lunar gravity Kevlar, Du Pont's superfiber, would suffice for either a spinning tether, which could raise and lower loads of several tons every twenty minutes, or a tower reaching thousands of miles above the lunar surface. Bekey believes that a

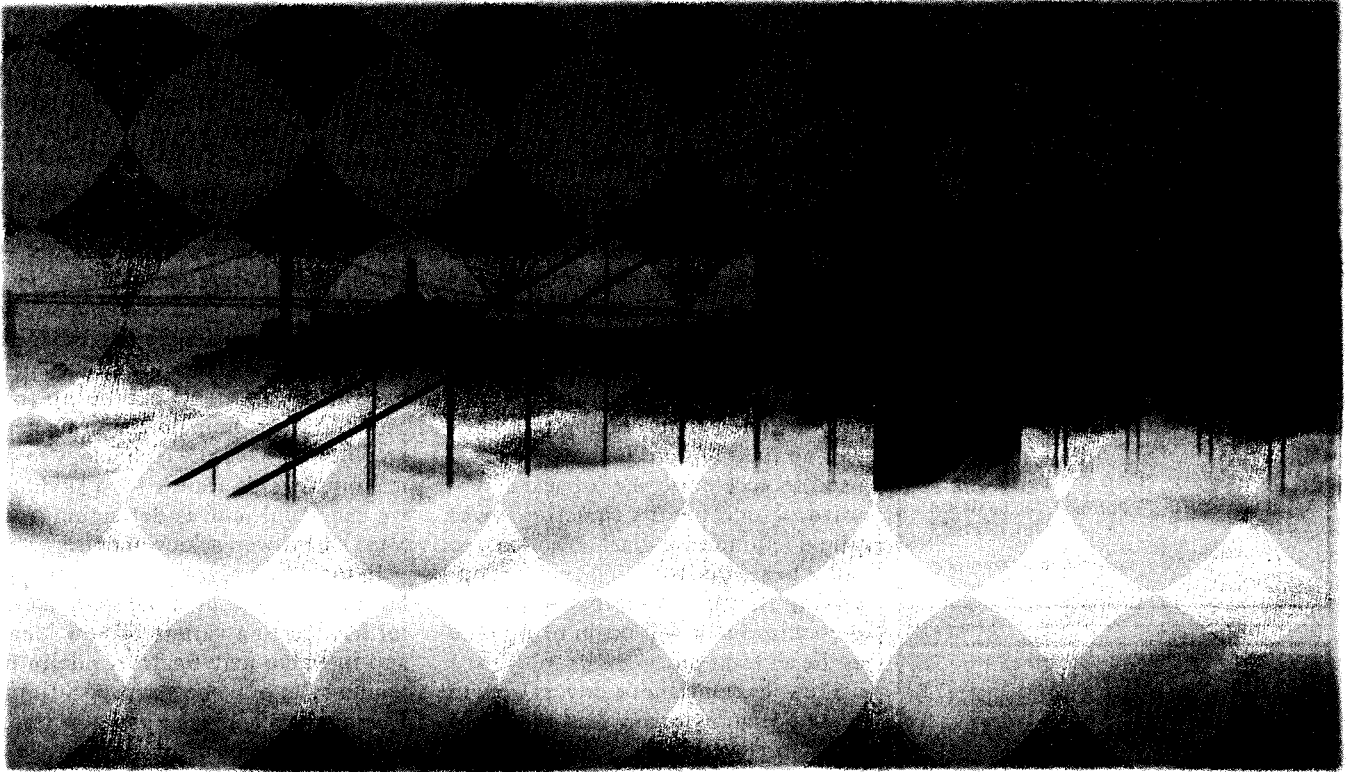
spinning tether in orbit around the Moon, combined with one spinning in Earth's orbit, could eventually become a "highway" for payloads to travel to and from the Moon. Such a system would become economically attractive if NASA were to construct a permanent lunar base. "Studies indicate that several missions per year, carrying payloads of five to ten tons, might make the system pay off," Bekey says.

All these structures would be able to sustain their great mass against stresses because they would be constructed under tension rather than compression—that is, built from the center of mass out. Around 1980 a group of research scientists, including Forward, Moravec, John McCarthy, and Marvin Minsky, discussed various means of sustaining a skyhook's center of mass at a height less daunting than 22,400 miles. Out of this discussion emerged the first design for a dynamic "beanstalk," which could be built from the ground up but would require a constant expenditure of energy to hold it in place. Partisans have given it, like other models, a number of colorful names: Charles Sheffield calls it "the Indian rope trick," while Forward favors "the space fountain," noting that it supports itself the way a water fountain sustains a ball bobbing at the top of its column.

The heart of the structure would be a hollow tower through which particles were fired upward at hypersonic speeds. These particles would be slowed by electromagnetic drag devices, creating a braking force that exerted an upward lift on the structure. This lift would support the tower in the same way that pressurized air can stiffen and hold up the walls of large ribbed tents. When the particles reached the top of the tower, they would be turned



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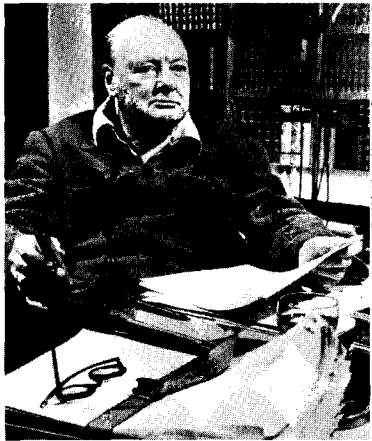
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around by an electromagnetic device, fired downward, and accelerated more than gravity accelerates them naturally. In the process they would exert still more upward force, and would reach the ground at nearly the same velocity at which they had left. They would then be diverted by more magnets through an underground tunnel, where electromagnetic accelerators would push them back up to launch velocity and send them on their way again.

As long as enough energy was pumped into the system to keep the particles at running speed, the tower could rise to any height. Because the slowing and speeding of particles would be adjusted to counter the forces of gravity, no superstrength building materials would be needed. Although lavish amounts of energy would be required to get the system going, the power gained from braking the particles on their upward journey could be used to accelerate them back downward, which means that the tower would require additional power only to offset losses due to inefficiencies in operating its various motors—just as a pressurized tent will begin to sag only as the air leaks out.

If its electromagnetic drivers were to cease operating for any reason, the entire tower would slowly collapse. Forward notes that the space fountain would have to be built "with a good deal of redundancy in it." A prudently designed space fountain would have several energy streams, each with an independent power supply. Each system would suffice to support the tower, and all of them together would sustain the lifting of great loads. Should all systems fail simultaneously, the space fountain would come apart, its top sections going into orbit around Earth and its lower sections burning up in the atmosphere or crashing to the ground in a line stretching a few hundred miles to the east. Thus it would be sited on the western edge of a desert or an ocean.

Proponents of dynamic beanstalks see no need to wait for improved graphite material to be developed. Rod Hyde, a scientist at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory who has done considerable work on engineering details for a space fountain, insists, "This is a skyhook that can be built using only engineering development rather than requiring scientific breakthroughs."

THESE SYSTEMS sound impressive, but none of them has ever been tested, and some NASA engineers warn of the pitfalls that await any attempt to bring untried technologies into use. Jesco von Puttkamer, a program manager for the shuttle, who has been with NASA for thirty years, sees the space elevator as "a beautiful, idealistic concept that looks great on paper and would work in principle." But, he says, "the practicality of translating it into the real world is insurmountable." Von Puttkamer speaks of the engineer's natural preference for proven technologies, and of the "real-world constraints"—the need for congressional and societal approval and the unpredictable behavior of long, flexible materials under exotic conditions. He allows that "perhaps thirty to sixty, maybe up to a hundred, years from now, a future generation may have the technology to do it," but regards claims for a skyhook we can build now as detracting from NASA's hard-won achievements.

In the dozen years since it was popularized, the concept of the space elevator has led to a variety of new ideas, and its value may finally reside in its tendency to provoke such speculation. Emerging technologies and new materials have prompted smaller, less grandiose designs, which will end up competing with one another—and, Von Puttkamer notes, with future generations of rocket launch vehicles.

Such devices can easily be dismissed as science-fiction extravaganzas whose realization lies beyond our lifetime, but technology—especially when it has military applications—can develop extremely fast once the engineering principles have been well defined. Many of the young engineers who began working on rocketry immediately before the Second World War imagined that manned space stations would be orbiting Earth during their working lifetimes, though few others foresaw such progress. The U.S. President whose Administration will oversee the first launch system to supersede rocketry in sending cargoes into space may today be serving in some state legislature.

In the meantime, an increasing number of scientists as well as space buffs are designing plans for tethers and space elevators. They, at least, are ready to start now.

—Gregory Feeley

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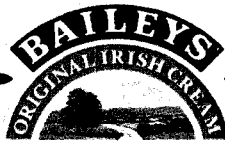
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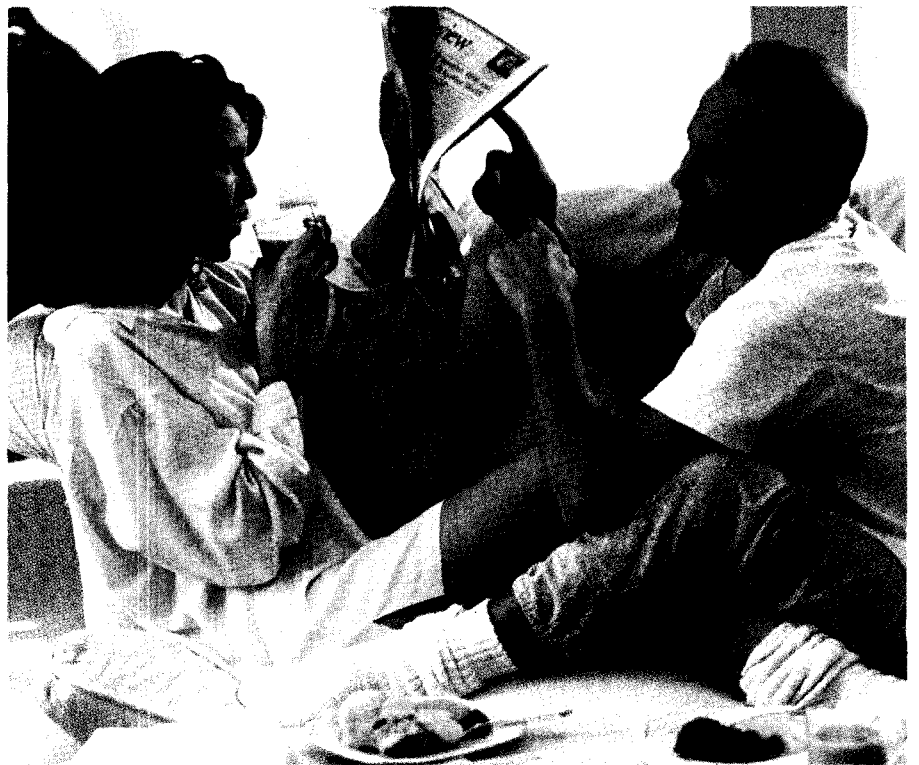


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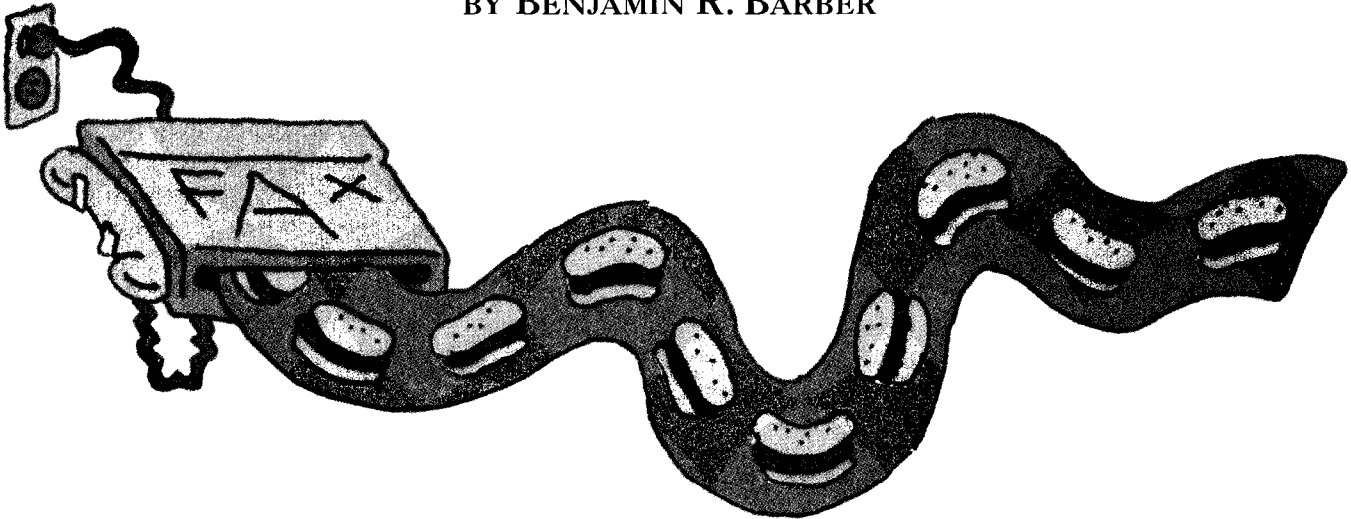
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The two axial principles of our age—tribalism and globalism—clash at every point except one: they may both be threatening to democracy

JIHAD VS. MCWORLD

BY BENJAMIN R. BARBER



JUST BEYOND THE HORIZON OF CURRENT events lie two possible political futures—both bleak, neither democratic. The first is a retribalization of large swaths of humankind by war and bloodshed: a threatened Lebanonization of national states in which culture is pitted against culture, people against people, tribe against tribe—a Jihad in the name of a hundred narrowly conceived faiths against every kind of interdependence, every kind of artificial social cooperation and civic mutuality. The second is being borne in on us by the onrush of economic and ecological forces that demand integration and uniformity and that mesmerize the world with fast music, fast computers, and fast food—with MTV, Macintosh, and McDonald's, pressing nations into one commercially homogeneous global network: one McWorld tied together by technology, ecology, communications, and commerce. The planet is falling precipitantly apart *and* coming reluctantly together at the very same moment.

These two tendencies are sometimes visible in the same countries at the same instant: thus Yugoslavia, clamoring just recently to join the New Europe, is exploding into fragments; India is try-

ing to live up to its reputation as the world's largest integral democracy while powerful new fundamentalist parties like the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party, along with nationalist assassins, are imperiling its hard-won unity. States are breaking up or joining up: the Soviet Union has disappeared almost overnight, its parts forming new unions with one another or with like-minded nationalities in neighboring states. The old interwar national state based on territory and political sovereignty looks to be a mere transitional development.

The tendencies of what I am here calling the forces of Jihad and the forces of McWorld operate with equal strength in opposite directions, the one driven by parochial hatreds, the other by universalizing markets, the one re-creating ancient subnational and ethnic borders from within, the other making national borders porous from without. They have one thing in common: neither offers much hope to citizens looking for practical ways to govern themselves democratically. If the global future is to pit Jihad's centrifugal whirlwind against McWorld's centripetal black hole, the outcome is unlikely to be democratic—or so I will argue.

McWorld, or the Globalization of Politics

FOUR IMPERATIVES MAKE UP THE DYNAMIC OF McWorld: a market imperative, a resource imperative, an information-technology imperative, and an ecological imperative. By shrinking the world and diminishing the salience of national borders, these imperatives have in combination achieved a considerable victory over factiousness and particularism, and not least of all over their most virulent traditional form—nationalism. It is the realists who are now Europeans, the utopians who dream nostalgically of a resurgent England or Germany, perhaps even a resurgent Wales or Saxony. Yesterday's wishful cry for one world has yielded to the reality of McWorld.

The market imperative. Marxist and Leninist theories of imperialism assumed that the quest for ever-expanding markets would in time compel nation-based capitalist economies to push against national boundaries in search of an international economic imperium. Whatever else has happened to the scientific predictions of Marxism, in this domain they have proved farsighted. All national economies are now vulnerable to the inroads of larger, transnational markets within which trade is free, currencies are convertible, access to banking is open, and contracts are enforceable under law. In Europe, Asia, Africa, the South Pacific, and the Americas such markets are eroding national sovereignty and giving rise to entities—international banks, trade associations, transnational lob-

bies like OPEC and Greenpeace, world news services like CNN and the BBC, and multinational corporations that increasingly lack a meaningful national identity—that neither reflect nor respect nationhood as an organizing or regulative principle.

The market imperative has also reinforced the quest for international peace and stability, requisites of an efficient international economy. Markets are enemies of parochialism, isolation, fractiousness, war. Market psychology attenuates the psychology of ideological and religious cleavages and assumes a concord among producers and consumers—categories that ill fit narrowly conceived national or religious cultures. Shopping has little tolerance for blue laws, whether dictated by pub-closing British paternalism, Sabbath-observing Jewish Orthodox fundamentalism, or no-Sunday-liquor-sales Massachusetts puritanism. In the context of common markets, international law ceases to be a vision of justice and becomes a workaday framework for getting things done—enforcing contracts, ensuring that governments abide by deals, regulating trade and currency relations, and so forth.

Common markets demand a common language, as well as a common currency, and they produce common behaviors of the kind bred by cosmopolitan city life everywhere. Commercial pilots, computer programmers, international bankers, media specialists, oil riggers, entertainment celebrities, ecology experts, demographers, accountants, professors, athletes—these compose a new breed of men and women for whom religion, culture, and



nationality can seem only marginal elements in a working identity. Although sociologists of everyday life will no doubt continue to distinguish a Japanese from an American mode, shopping has a common signature throughout the world. Cynics might even say that some of the recent revolutions in Eastern Europe have had as their true goal not liberty and the right to vote but well-paying jobs and the right to shop (although the vote is proving easier to acquire than consumer goods). The market imperative is, then, plenty powerful; but, notwithstanding some of the claims made for "democratic capitalism," it is not identical with the democratic imperative.

The resource imperative. Democrats once dreamed of societies whose political autonomy rested firmly on economic independence. The Athenians idealized what they called autarky, and tried for a while to create a way of life simple and austere enough to make the polis genuinely self-sufficient. To be free meant to be independent of any other community or polis. Not even the Athenians were able to achieve autarky, however: human nature, it turns out, is dependency. By the time of Pericles, Athenian politics was inextricably bound up with a flowering empire held together by naval power and commerce—an empire that, even as it appeared to enhance Athenian might, ate away at Athenian independence and autarky. Master and slave, it turned out, were bound together by mutual insufficiency.

The dream of autarky briefly engrossed nineteenth-century America as well, for the underpopulated, end-

lessly bountiful land, the cornucopia of natural resources, and the natural barriers of a continent walled in by two great seas led many to believe that America could be a world unto itself. Given this past, it has been harder for Americans than for most to accept the inevitability of interdependence. But the rapid depletion of resources even in a country like ours, where they once seemed inexhaustible, and the maldistribution of arable soil and mineral resources on the planet, leave even the wealthiest societies ever more resource-dependent and many other nations in permanently desperate straits.

Every nation, it turns out, needs something another nation has; some nations have almost nothing they need.

The information-technology imperative. Enlightenment science and the technologies derived from it are inherently universalizing. They entail a quest for descriptive principles of general application, a search for universal solutions to particular problems, and an unswerving embrace of objectivity and impartiality.

Scientific progress embodies and depends on open communication, a common discourse rooted in rationality, collaboration, and an easy and regular flow and exchange of information. Such ideals can be hypocritical covers for power-mongering by elites, and they may be shown to be wanting in many other ways, but they are entailed by the very idea of science and they make science and globalization practical allies.

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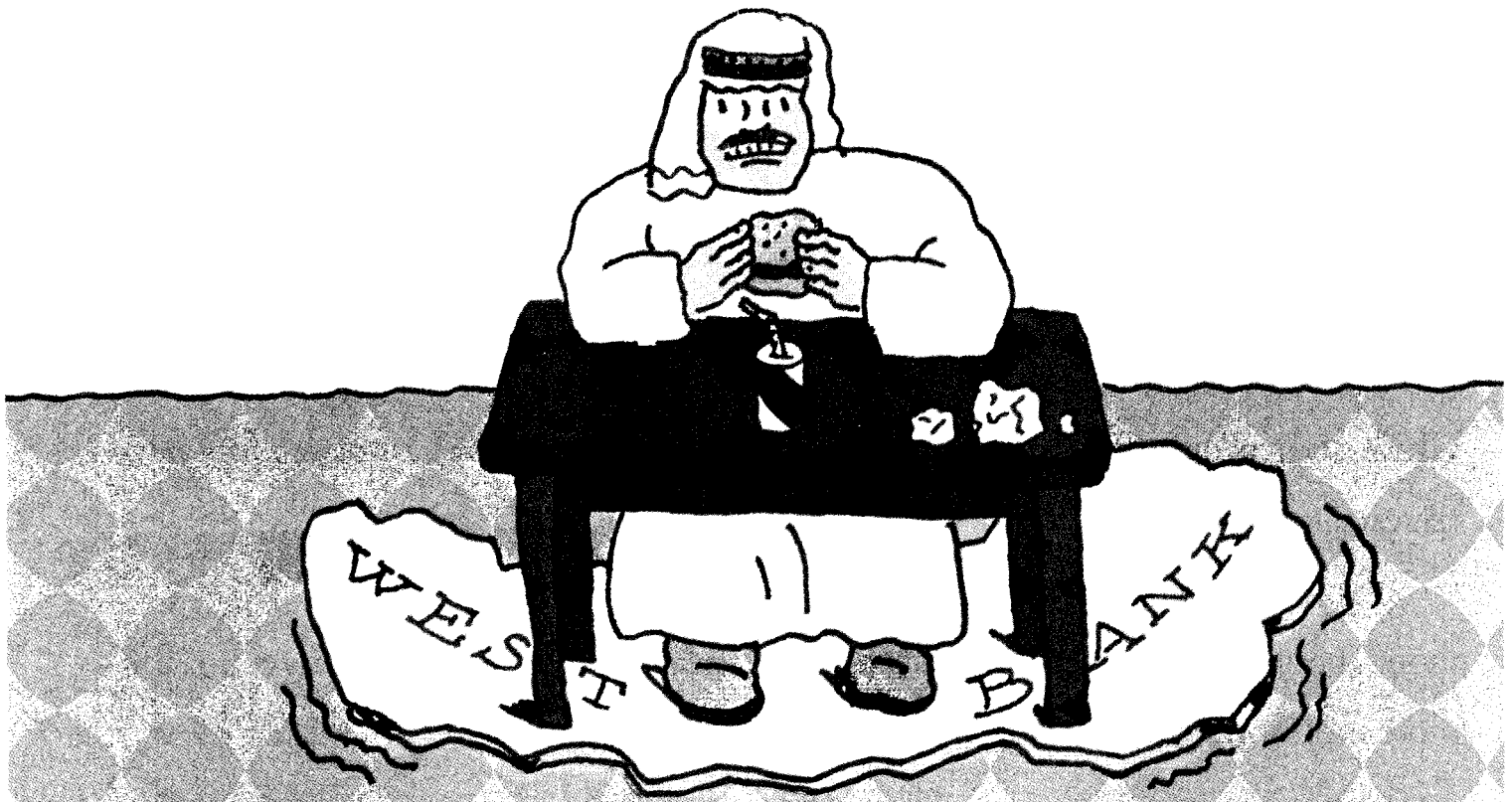
technologies. The hardware of these technologies tends to be systemic and integrated—computer, television, cable, satellite, laser, fiber-optic, and microchip technologies combining to create a vast interactive communications and information network that can potentially give every person on earth access to every other person, and make every datum, every byte, available to every set of eyes. If the automobile was, as George Ball once said (when he gave his blessing to a Fiat factory in the Soviet Union during the Cold War), “an ideology on four wheels,” then electronic telecommunication and information systems are an ideology at 186,000 miles per second—which makes for a very small planet in a very big hurry. Individual cultures speak particular languages; commerce and science increasingly speak English; the whole world speaks logarithms and binary mathematics.

Moreover, the pursuit of science and technology asks for, even compels, open societies. Satellite footprints do not respect national borders; telephone wires penetrate the most closed societies. With photocopying and then fax machines having infiltrated Soviet universities and *samizdat* literary circles in the eighties, and computer modems having multiplied like rabbits in communism’s bureaucratic warrens thereafter, *glasnost* could not be far behind. In their social requisites, secrecy and science are enemies.

The new technology’s software is perhaps even more globalizing than its hardware. The information arm of international commerce’s sprawling body reaches out and touches distinct nations and parochial cultures, and gives

them a common face chiseled in Hollywood, on Madison Avenue, and in Silicon Valley. Throughout the 1980s one of the most-watched television programs in South Africa was *The Cosby Show*. The demise of apartheid was already in production. Exhibitors at the 1991 Cannes film festival expressed growing anxiety over the “homogenization” and “Americanization” of the global film industry when, for the third year running, American films dominated the awards ceremonies. America has dominated the world’s popular culture for much longer, and much more decisively. In November of 1991 Switzerland’s once insular culture boasted best-seller lists featuring *Terminator 2* as the No. 1 movie, *Scarlett* as the No. 1 book, and Prince’s *Diamonds and Pearls* as the No. 1 record album. No wonder the Japanese are buying Hollywood film studios even faster than Americans are buying Japanese television sets. This kind of software supremacy may in the long term be far more important than hardware superiority, because culture has become more potent than armaments. What is the power of the Pentagon compared with Disneyland? Can the Sixth Fleet keep up with CNN? McDonald’s in Moscow and Coke in China will do more to create a global culture than military colonization ever could. It is less the goods than the brand names that do the work, for they convey life-style images that alter perception and challenge behavior. They make up the seductive software of McWorld’s common (at times much too common) soul.

Yet in all this high-tech commercial world there is nothing that looks particularly democratic. It lends itself



to surveillance as well as liberty, to new forms of manipulation and covert control as well as new kinds of participation, to skewed, unjust market outcomes as well as greater productivity. The consumer society and the open society are not quite synonymous. Capitalism and democracy have a relationship, but it is something less than a marriage. An efficient free market after all requires that consumers be free to vote their dollars on competing goods, not that citizens be free to vote their values and beliefs on competing political candidates and programs. The free market flourished in junta-run Chile, in military-governed Taiwan and Korea, and, earlier, in a variety of autocratic European empires as well as their colonial possessions.

The ecological imperative. The impact of globalization on ecology is a cliché even to world leaders who ignore it. We know well enough that the German forests can be destroyed by Swiss and Italians driving gas-guzzlers fueled by leaded gas. We also know that the planet can be asphyxiated by greenhouse gases because Brazilian farmers want to be part of the twentieth century and are burning down tropical rain forests to clear a little land to plough, and because Indonesians make a living out of converting their lush jungle into toothpicks for fastidious Japanese diners, upsetting the delicate oxygen balance and in effect puncturing our global lungs. Yet this ecological consciousness has meant not only greater awareness but also greater inequality, as modernized nations try to slam the door behind them, saying to developing nations,

"The world cannot afford *your* modernization; ours has wrung it dry!"

Each of the four imperatives just cited is transnational, transideological, and transcultural. Each applies impartially to Catholics, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists; to democrats and totalitarians; to capitalists and socialists. The Enlightenment dream of a universal rational society has to a remarkable degree been realized—but in a form that is commercialized, homogenized, depoliticized, bureaucratized, and, of course, radically incomplete, for the movement toward McWorld is in competition with forces of global breakdown, national dissolution, and centrifugal corruption. These forces, working in the opposite direction, are the essence of what I call Jihad.

Jihad, or the Lebanonization of the World

PEC, THE WORLD BANK, THE UNITED NATIONS, the International Red Cross, the multinational corporation . . . there are scores of institutions that reflect globalization. But they often appear as ineffective reactors to the world's real actors: national states and, to an ever greater degree, subnational factions in permanent rebellion against uniformity and integration—even the kind represented by universal law and justice. The headlines feature these players regularly: they are cultures, not countries; parts, not wholes; sects, not religions; rebellious factions and dissenting minorities at war not just with globalism but with the tradi-



tional nation-state. Kurds, Basques, Puerto Ricans, Ossetians, East Timoreans, Quebecois, the Catholics of Northern Ireland, Abkhazians, Kurile Islander Japanese, the Zulus of Inkatha, Catalonians, Tamils, and, of course, Palestinians—people without countries, inhabiting nations not their own, seeking smaller worlds within borders that will seal them off from modernity.

A powerful irony is at work here. Nationalism was once a force of integration and unification, a movement aimed at bringing together disparate clans, tribes, and cultural fragments under new, assimilationist flags. But as Ortega y Gasset noted more than sixty years ago, having won its victories, nationalism changed its strategy. In the 1920s, and again today, it is more often a reactionary and divisive force, pulverizing the very nations it once helped cement together. The force that creates nations is “inclusive,” Ortega wrote in *The Revolt of the Masses*. “In periods of consolidation, nationalism has a positive value, and is a lofty standard. But in Europe everything is more than consolidated, and nationalism is nothing but a mania. . . .”

This mania has left the post-Cold War world smoldering with hot wars; the international scene is little more unified than it was at the end of the Great War, in Ortega’s own time. There were more than thirty wars in progress last year, most of them ethnic, racial, tribal, or religious in character, and the list of unsafe regions doesn’t seem to be getting any shorter. Some new world order!

The aim of many of these small-scale wars is to redraw boundaries, to implode states and resecure parochial

identities: to escape McWorld’s dully insistent imperatives. The mood is that of Jihad: war not as an instrument of policy but as an emblem of identity, an expression of community, an end in itself. Even where there is no shooting war, there is fractiousness, secession, and the quest for ever smaller communities. Add to the list of dangerous countries those at risk: In Switzerland and Spain, Jurassian and Basque separatists still argue the virtues of ancient identities, sometimes in the language of bombs. Hyperdisintegration in the former Soviet Union may well continue unabated—not just a Ukraine independent from the Soviet Union but a Bessarabian Ukraine independent from the Ukrainian republic; not just Russia severed from the defunct union but Tatarstan severed from Russia. Yugoslavia makes even the disunited, ex-Soviet, nonsocialist republics that were once the Soviet Union look integrated, its sectarian fatherlands springing up within factional motherlands like weeds within weeds within weeds. Kurdish independence would threaten the territorial integrity of four Middle Eastern nations. Well before the current cataclysm Soviet Georgia made a claim for autonomy from the Soviet Union, only to be faced with its Ossetians (164,000 in a republic of 5.5 million) demanding their own self-determination within Georgia. The Abkhazian minority in Georgia has followed suit. Even the good will established by Canada’s once promising Meech Lake protocols is in danger, with Francophone Quebec again threatening the dissolution of the federation. In South Africa the emer-



gence from apartheid was hardly achieved when friction between Inkatha's Zulus and the African National Congress's tribally identified members threatened to replace Europeans' racism with an indigenous tribal war. After thirty years of attempted integration using the colonial language (English) as a unifier, Nigeria is now playing with the idea of linguistic multiculturalism—which could mean the cultural breakup of the nation into hundreds of tribal fragments. Even Saddam Hussein has benefited from the threat of internal Jihad, having used renewed tribal and religious warfare to turn last season's mortal enemies into reluctant allies of an Iraqi nationhood that he nearly destroyed.

The passing of communism has torn away the thin veneer of internationalism (workers of the world unite!) to reveal ethnic prejudices that are not only ugly and deep-seated but increasingly murderous. Europe's old scourge, anti-Semitism, is back with a vengeance, but it is only one of many antagonisms. It appears all too easy to throw the historical gears into reverse and pass from a Communist dictatorship back into a tribal state.

Among the tribes, religion is also a battlefield. ("Jihad" is a rich word whose generic meaning is "struggle"—usually the struggle of the soul to avert evil. Strictly applied to religious war, it is used only in reference to battles where the faith is under assault, or battles against a government that denies the practice of Islam. My use here is rhetorical, but does follow both journalistic practice and history.) Remember the Thirty Years War? Whatever

forms of Enlightenment universalism might once have come to grace such historically related forms of monotheism as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, in many of their modern incarnations they are parochial rather than cosmopolitan, angry rather than loving, proselytizing rather than ecumenical, zealous rather than rationalist, sectarian rather than deistic, ethnocentric rather than universalizing. As a result, like the new forms of hypernationalism, the new expressions of religious fundamentalism are fractious and pulverizing, never integrating. This is religion as the Crusaders knew it: a battle to the death for souls that if not saved will be forever lost.

The atmospherics of Jihad have resulted in a breakdown of civility in the name of identity, of comity in the name of community. International relations have sometimes taken on the aspect of gang war—cultural turf battles featuring tribal factions that were supposed to be sublimated as integral parts of large national, economic, postcolonial, and constitutional entities.

The Darkening Future of Democracy

THESE RATHER MELODRAMATIC TABLEAUX VIVANTS do not tell the whole story, however. For all their defects, Jihad and McWorld have their attractions. Yet, to repeat and insist, the attractions are unrelated to democracy. Neither McWorld nor Jihad is remotely democratic in impulse. Neither needs democracy; neither promotes democracy.



It's time for a change to Gallo.

This roast lamb with fresh raspberries deserves the richness of our 1985 Cabernet Sauvignon. Its complex, oak-aged flavor makes it a perfect complement.



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prescient; his prophecy of peace and internationalism came just before blitzkrieg, world war, and the Holocaust tore the old order to bits. Yet democracy is how we remonstrate with reality, the rebuke our aspirations offer to history. And if retribalization is inhospitable to democracy, there is nonetheless a form of democratic government that can accommodate parochialism and communitarianism, one that can even save them from their defects and make them more tolerant and participatory: decentralized participatory democracy. And if McWorld is indifferent to democracy, there is nonetheless a form of democratic government that suits global markets passably well—representative government in its federal or, better still, confederal variation.

With its concern for accountability, the protection of minorities, and the universal rule of law, a confederalized representative system would serve the political needs of McWorld as well as oligarchic bureaucratism or meritocratic elitism is currently doing. As we are already beginning to see, many nations may survive in the long term only as confederations that afford local regions smaller than “nations” extensive jurisdiction. Recommended reading for democrats of the twenty-first century is not the U.S. Constitution or the French Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen but the Articles of Confederation, that suddenly pertinent document that stitched together the thirteen American colonies into what then seemed a too loose confederation of independent states but now appears a new form of political realism, as veterans of Yeltsin’s new Russia and the new Europe created at Maastricht will attest.

By the same token, the participatory and direct form of democracy that engages citizens in civic activity and civic judgment and goes well beyond just voting and accountability—the system I have called “strong democracy”—suits the political needs of decentralized communities as well as theocratic and nationalist party dictatorships have done. Local neighborhoods need not be democratic, but they can be. Real democracy has flourished in diminutive settings: the spirit of liberty, Tocqueville said, is local. Participatory democracy, if not naturally apposite to tribalism, has an undeniable attractiveness under conditions of parochialism.

Democracy in any of these variations will, however, continue to be obstructed by the undemocratic and antidemocratic trends toward uniformitarian globalism and intolerant retribalization which I have portrayed here. For democracy to persist in our brave new McWorld, we will have to commit acts of conscious political will—a possibility, but hardly a probability, under these conditions. Political will requires much more than the quick fix of the transfer of institutions. Like technology transfer, institution transfer rests on foolish assumptions about a uniform world of the kind that once fired the imagination of colonial administrators. Spread English justice to the colonies by exporting wigs. Let an East Indian trading company

act as the vanguard to Britain’s free parliamentary institutions. Today’s well-intentioned quick-fixers in the National Endowment for Democracy and the Kennedy School of Government, in the unions and foundations and universities zealously nurturing contacts in Eastern Europe and the Third World, are hoping to democratize by long distance. Post Bulgaria a parliament by first-class mail. Fed Ex the Bill of Rights to Sri Lanka. Cable Cambodia some common law.

Yet Eastern Europe has already demonstrated that importing free political parties, parliaments, and presses cannot establish a democratic civil society; imposing a free market may even have the opposite effect. Democracy grows from the bottom up and cannot be imposed from the top down. Civil society has to be built from the inside out. The institutional superstructure comes last. Poland may become democratic, but then again it may heed the Pope, and prefer to found its politics on its Catholicism, with uncertain consequences for democracy. Bulgaria may become democratic, but it may prefer tribal war. The former Soviet Union may become a democratic confederation, or it may just grow into an anarchic and weak conglomeration of markets for other nations’ goods and services.

Democrats need to seek out indigenous democratic impulses. There is always a desire for self-government, always some expression of participation, accountability, consent, and representation, even in traditional hierarchical societies. These need to be identified, tapped, modified, and incorporated into new democratic practices with an indigenous flavor. The tortoises among the democratizers may ultimately outlive or outpace the hares, for they will have the time and patience to explore conditions along the way, and to adapt their gait to changing circumstances. Tragically, democracy in a hurry often looks something like France in 1794 or China in 1989.

It certainly seems possible that the most attractive democratic ideal in the face of the brutal realities of Jihad and the dull realities of McWorld will be a confederal union of semi-autonomous communities smaller than nation-states, tied together into regional economic associations and markets larger than nation-states—participatory and self-determining in local matters at the bottom, representative and accountable at the top. The nation-state would play a diminished role, and sovereignty would lose some of its political potency. The Green movement adage “Think globally, act locally” would actually come to describe the conduct of politics.

This vision reflects only an ideal, however—one that is not terribly likely to be realized. Freedom, Jean-Jacques Rousseau once wrote, is a food easy to eat but hard to digest. Still, democracy has always played itself out against the odds. And democracy remains both a form of coherence as binding as McWorld and a secular faith potentially as inspiring as Jihad. □

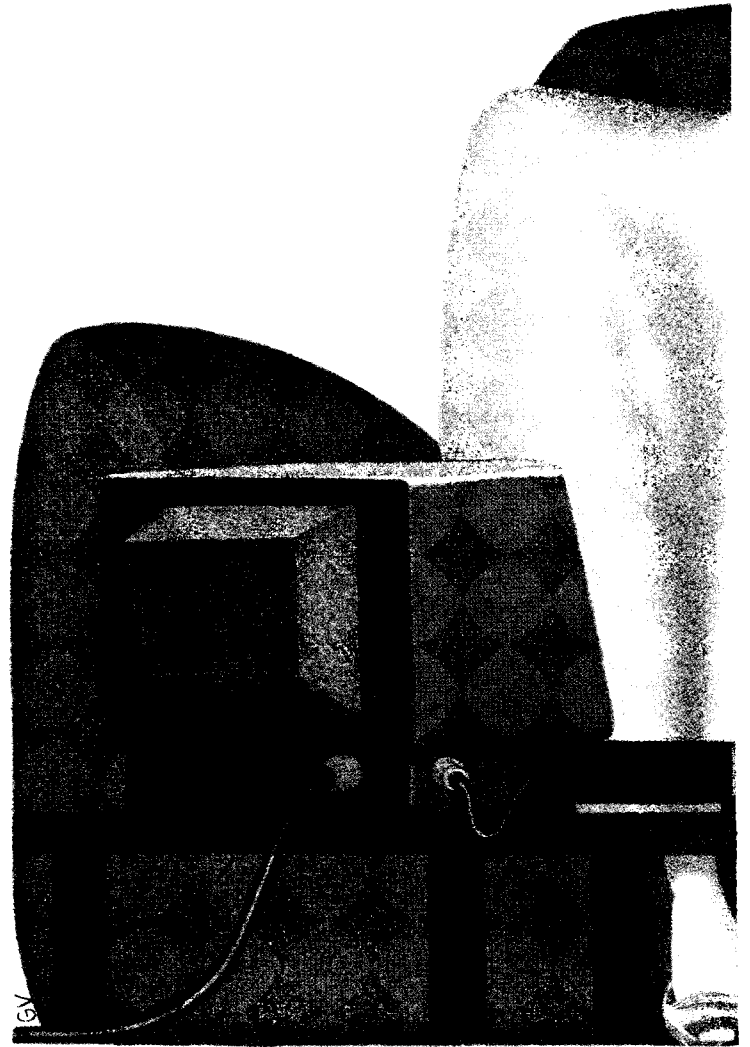
A remarkable new technology may soon tell us precisely who watches television, what they watch, and for how long—and thus require a major restructuring of the way television conducts its business

WATCHING AMERICANS WATCH TV

BY ERIK LARSON

A GREAT MYSTERY HAS GNAWED AT THE HEARTS OF advertisers ever since the Bulova Watch Company paid for the first TV ad, which aired on July 1, 1941: How many people stick around for the commercials? Advertisers have always had to come at the question from an oblique angle, measuring the audiences for the programs surrounding their commercials rather than for the commercials themselves. The A. C. Nielsen Company brought technology to the business of estimating audience size in 1942, with the first mechanical meter, the Audimeter, which used a stylus to scratch out a record of where a radio dial was tuned. The system was crude but once refined proved far faster than the competition's surveys, and Nielsen quickly gained monopoly control over the business of national ratings, at first for radio and later for television. Most viewers know Nielsen as the maker of the bullets that killed *Star Trek* and *Twin Peaks*, but to think of its ratings exclusively in terms of their show-stopping power is to underestimate the depth of Nielsen's influence over the culture, content, and business of television, and thus over the evolution of our consumer culture itself. Nielsen *is* television. Imagine a company like IBM granting to an outside party a decisive say in whether it has a profit or a loss in a given quarter, and you'll begin to understand Nielsen's peculiar hold over broadcasting.

Nielsen kept competitors at bay through the deft and timely use of technology, but each fundamental advance changed the landscape of television. All along, the com-



pany's engineers pursued TV's Golden Fleece, the elusive "passive" audience meter, a device capable of recognizing each TV viewer and recording even his briefest exit, without his having to lift a finger. Audience engineers have dreamed of such a device ever since that epiphanic instant in 1952 when a Toledo, Ohio, water commissioner realized that a sudden city-wide drop in pressure coincided exactly with a commercial break in *I Love Lucy*, and joked that someone should invent a "flushometer." The men from Nielsen tried weight-sensing scales and electric eyes and even sophisticated military technology of the kind we so vividly saw put to work during the Gulf War. Still, some insurmountable obstacle always seemed to get in the way—big dogs, for example, the bane of any audience engineer.

Until lately Nielsen could afford to pursue this quest at



a leisurely pace. Now, however, Nielsen's three largest customers, ABC, CBS, and NBC, openly charge that the company's existing "people meter" technology is unreliable, perhaps obsolete. After an exhaustive investigation they concluded in 1989 that their \$10 billion industry had become a helpless captive of some rather flimsy statistics. Soon Nielsen reported steep, inexplicable declines in key segments of TV viewing which seemed to confirm the networks' worst fears and deeply shook their faith in the company's ratings.

"The thing we've always had has been this set of numbers," says Alan Wurtzel, ABC's senior research executive. "It's the foundation upon which program decisions are made, deals are made, advertising dollars are spent. When those numbers became unreliable, inconsistent, inaccurate, unexplainable, they just threw into chaos almost

everything we did, because they were the basis on which the business was built."

To make matters worse, last April the networks invited all comers to present ideas for alternative ways of measuring the U.S. audience, the television equivalent of having your spouse suddenly begin advertising for a new lover. The competition has begun to stir. The Arbitron Company, which competes fiercely with Nielsen to rate local TV markets, continues to threaten to go national; it has funded an effort at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab to develop a passive meter and last November began tracking public response to the full network schedule. A French company has already deployed a kind of passive meter; Arbitron has begun testing the system for use here. Britain's AGB International, which was deeply gored in a past encounter

with Nielsen, hints that the U.S. market is simply too lucrative to resist.

Nielsen, therefore, finds itself virtually forced to deploy its newest secret weapon—a device that may be the ultimate passive meter. I met the machine in New York. It can identify viewers and even gives a rough indication of whether their heads are turned toward the TV. The system could fix a lot of the problems cited by the networks, but its deployment would have a significance far beyond its capacity to produce accurate numbers. By tracking the TV audience on a second-by-second basis, Nielsen's passive meter may yield the first accurate ratings of commercials—not shows, *commercials*—and thus at last solve that great nagging mystery about the “reach” of advertising. If it does, however, it will sharply alter the way consumer products are marketed in America, even the way television shows are written and produced. “The implications,” says John Dimling, Nielsen Media's executive vice-president, “could be quite staggering.”

But does anyone really want to know the truths that Nielsen's black box (and for now it really is a black box) may bring? What's wrong with Nielsen's numbers? Why did everyone accept them until now? And how did television, arguably the most powerful influence on American culture, become so dependent on such a fragile collection of digits in the first place?

Sonar in the Living Room

THIS MAY BE HARD TO IMAGINE, BUT AT THE dawn of broadcasting, advertisers doubted that radio and TV would ever be useful for wooing consumers. They needed proof. They hired market researchers, themselves newly arrived on the commercial landscape, to conduct surveys, first simply to find out how many homes in America had a radio and later to determine what programs drew the most listeners. Somewhere along the way, however, ratings took on a power they were never meant to have, much to the chagrin even of Robert Elder, a co-inventor of Nielsen's first meter. In a 1978 letter he wrote that television “suffers greatly from the misuse of the [Nielsen Television Index] and for that reason I am not too happy about my part in getting it started.”

Nielsen, founded in 1923 by Arthur C. Nielsen, Sr., acquired the rights to the Audimeter from Elder and his partner, Louis Woodruff, in 1936. The company spent six years refining the idea, and in 1942 launched a radio ratings service that within a few years went national and directly challenged the dominant supplier of the day, C. E. Hooper, Inc., whose “Hooperatings” still relied on surveys. Nielsen promised better, faster numbers, and quickly left Hooper in the dust. In 1950 Nielsen launched its meter-based television index, all the while continuing a policy of aggressively patenting every conceivable audience-measurement idea—a policy that paid

off in 1961, when its toughest competitor yet, the American Research Bureau, which had crowded one of Nielsen's meter patents, wound up having to pay Nielsen royalties on all sales associated with the technology. The ARB temporarily abandoned TV meters in 1972; it took the name Arbitron in 1973.

Throughout the 1950s the amount of data that Nielsen delivered and the speed at which it did so increased sharply. At first Nielsen needed six weeks for delivery. By 1961 delivery took sixteen days, although in 1959 Nielsen had begun reporting day-after ratings from a small sample of homes (ARB did it first, in 1957). Newspapers reported Nielsen's rankings, a practice that strengthened the importance of ratings. C. E. Hooper had established the practice, by providing lists of top-rated programs to the press. The growing influence of ratings twice drew the attention of Congress, more forcefully in 1963–1964, with a full-blown investigation that yielded 1,700 pages of testimony and, ultimately, a set of Federal Trade Commission guidelines that sternly warned broadcasters always to remember that ratings data, based as they were on statistical estimates, were “inherently imperfect.”

Researchers, meanwhile, took up the hunt for a passive meter.

In 1964 a San Diego inventor named James Tanner caused a major stir at the National Association of Broadcasters' meeting in Chicago, where he planned to demonstrate a ratings truck capable of capturing the tuning of televisions that it passed on the street. The truck, he claimed, could monitor up to 3,500 TVs every thirty minutes while moving at speeds of up to fifty miles per hour, giving new meaning to the notion of a ratings sweep.

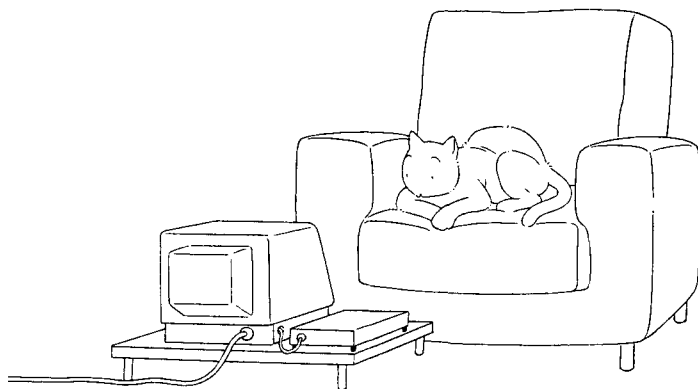
Tanner had to cancel his demonstration, however, because he couldn't get the truck to work. The idea died.

The next year an Oklahoma State University professor, Charles L. Allen, produced a sensation when he published the results of his work with what may have been the first passive audience meter, his DynaScope, a stop-action movie camera that, with the help of a strategically placed mirror, took pictures every fifteen seconds of both the audience and the shows they were watching. Graduate students analyzed almost 1.5 million photographs from ninety-five test homes to see whether people were attentive, inattentive, or simply absent while the TV was on, and discovered that 19 percent of the time the TV played to an empty room. For another 21 percent of the time someone was present but so involved in something else that he or she didn't see the screen. The DynaScope didn't restrain anyone's behavior, apparently: Allen's graduate students wound up poring over stop-action accounts of couples fighting and making love.

The study spurred a flurry of invention among Nielsen's engineers. They experimented with bladderlike scales hidden in couches which would identify people by weight, a concept later embodied in what employees still

refer to as the “whoopee cushion” patent. The scales, however, couldn’t tell the difference between kids and big dogs. The engineers also tried using height as an identifier. They lined doorways with electric eyes that measured each viewer who came through. High heels were its undoing.

Things took a turn toward the spooky in 1981, when David A. Kiewit became Nielsen Media’s director of engineering. He had spent the previous decade building surveillance and targeting systems for submarines and bombers, a terrific background for anyone interested in either counting or destroying vast numbers of TV viewers. Kiewit and colleagues devised an infrared sensor that scanned rooms for “hot bodies.” The system could indeed locate and count people, but it also counted light bulbs and toasters. One Nielsen engineer took the system home for some real-world testing and quickly got fed up. It kept reporting an extra person in his living room.



“Whenever anybody upstairs took a shower,” Kiewit told me recently, “there appeared to be a very long, thin person standing behind the couch who stood there for ten minutes or so and then *slo-o-o-owly* went away.” The phantom was a hot-water pipe embedded in the wall.

With a little tinkering the system could be calibrated to skip most nonhuman sources of heat, but it, too, proved vulnerable to the big-dog effect. “You could set your threshold so that if a house had a small dog, you could skip him,” Kiewit said, “but a big dog? You were in trouble.”

Next Kiewit’s group built a wall-mounted sonar set that scanned living rooms in exactly the way a ship scans New York harbor, transmitting inaudible signals and capturing the returning echoes. The system compared successive sonar images to isolate points of movement, and presumed these to be members of the audience. It was sensitive enough to pick up the soft heave of a viewer’s chest as he breathed—or the soft heave of a seat cushion easing back into shape after its occupant had gotten up and left.

As elaborate as these systems were, neither even came close to identifying viewers. A true passive meter was still a long way off, and Nielsen wasn’t in any great rush to get there. Its monopoly was intact; no serious competition was in sight.

The landscape of television, however, had suddenly

begun to change. In the 1950s a typical family got approximately three channels—well, actually 3.8 by Nielsen’s count. The networks sliced the audience pie into three substantial portions and didn’t much worry about whether Nielsen correctly allocated the crumbs. But cable TV arrived, VCRs followed (they first hit the U.S. market in 1975), and remote controls allowed viewers to switch channels effortlessly. The networks’ share of audience began to shrink.

A word of explanation here: Nielsen reports two numbers, the rating and the share. The rating is a measure of average audience and is expressed as a percentage of America’s total potential audience of 93.1 million TV-equipped households. During prime time only about 60 percent of these households actually watch their TVs. Nielsen’s share figures show how this active nightly audience divides itself among the various programs and stations. Suppose, for example, that this Thursday night 50

N Nielsen began documenting the networks’ declining audience in the 1978–1979 season, when the three still drew a robust 91 percent of prime-time viewers.

million households watch TV. Suppose that 25 million of these active households watch *Cheers*. The episode’s rating would be 26.9 gross rating points, or 26.9 percent of all 93.1 million TV-equipped households. The share would be 50 percent, or half of the 50 million viewers who actually watched TV during that portion of the evening.

Nielsen began documenting the cruel fact of the networks’ declining audience in the 1978–1979 season, when the three still drew a robust 91 percent of prime-time television viewers. Their share has shrunk every year since. By 1985 the average household could get 18.8 channels, and the networks’ share of audience had shrunk to 77 percent. By last year the average home got thirty channels and the networks’ share had fallen to 63 percent.

For a bit of culture shock, consider this: Seven of the fifty highest-rated programs of all time are 1964 episodes of *The Beverly Hillbillies*. Each had a rating of 41.8 to 44. In the most heavily watched of these, Jed, Jethro, and Granny somehow managed to command a 65 percent share of viewers—more than the combined share of all three networks today.

By the mid-1980s the explosion in TV choices had begun to outpace Nielsen’s ability to keep up. By now advertisers cared less about reaching masses of households

and more about reaching the demographic segments of the population best suited to their products: for example, women twenty-five to fifty-four, men eighteen to forty-nine, or kids. Nielsen's set meters, sophisticated versions of the original Audimeter, recorded only that a TV was on and that it was receiving a particular station. Nielsen got its demographic data from viewer diaries kept by a second panel of families. Researchers feared that one member of each family, usually the already harried woman of the house, typically kept the diary for everyone. With so many channels, they worried, how could anyone remember exactly what a family watched, let alone the channel on which it appeared? They fretted, too, about the so-called halo effect that occurred when distracted diary-keepers wrote down what they *would* have watched or *should* have watched, rather than what they really did watch.

By 1985 the networks were ready for a change, and AGB, the British ratings giant, offered a tempting one. AGB had previously announced that it wanted to wire America with a new kind of meter, one it had already deployed in Ireland, Thailand, and the Philippines, which captured tuning and demographics simultaneously, continuously. AGB offered all this, moreover, at a lower cost.

The networks, delighted by the challenge to Nielsen's monopoly as well as by the promised improvements, helped fund an initial test of AGB's technology in Boston. This was a tricky time for Nielsen. Even though the networks had already lost market share, they were still Nielsen's biggest customers; on a symbolic level, moreover, their continued endorsement was vital. But their contracts with Nielsen were about to expire. Nielsen had offered each of them a new three-year contract that would cost \$14 million.

CBS made a show of canceling its contract, ostensibly to prevent automatic renewal; in a further display of disaffection it signed a one-year contract with AGB. In July of 1987 David Poltrack, then and now CBS's top research official, told *The New York Times*, "It is certainly possible that we will not be a client of Nielsen come the fall." ABC also canceled, but did not sign with AGB.

AGB's year-and-a-half-long Boston test gave Nielsen time to dust off a meter it had begun testing a decade before, which worked very much like AGB's fearsome new weapon. Both were called people meters, because they sought to provide an electronic measure not just of tuning but of who was watching. Both began producing ratings in September of 1987, and thus gave broadcasters an opportunity to see how competing ratings systems would describe the same objective reality.

The two new systems produced radically conflicting results. The variations, moreover, occurred in a pattern that defied reduction to a mathematical constant. On the first Monday night, for example, Nielsen's people meter rated ABC's football game 15.3. AGB gave it 11.9, a discrepancy of roughly three million households. Nielsen's meter-and-diary system, which the company continued

in order to provide stability during the transition, gave the game 14.5.

Nielsen flatly declared that AGB's numbers were "wrong." AGB said Nielsen's were too high. Confusion reigned; advertising negotiations faltered. Ultimately the industry voted to stay with Nielsen, which was at least a known entity. AGB fled the country, reportedly trailing \$80 million in losses.

The new meter brought more data more quickly, including overnight demographics, but it was no friend to the networks. That first season the networks' share of audience dropped from 75 percent to 70 percent. The networks, acting together as the Committee on Nationwide Television Audience Measurement (CONTAM), a body that had been founded in 1963 in response to the congressional hearings, hired a respected media-research firm, Statistical Research, Inc., of Westfield, New Jersey, to investigate the new system.

The resulting report was completed in late 1989 and weighed six pounds. It was 550 pages long, in seven volumes, and arrived in a slick, heavy-gauge gray box meant to last a century. I read the report—every killing, if soporific, detail. This may be my imagination, but I thought I detected a kind of deep and weary sorrow in its text, a disappointed sigh: so this is what went on behind the curtains of Oz all these years! The report "documented an erosion in the quality of the Nielsen service," in its authors' words. "The vision, the actions, and the commitment of the past have been diminished."

Jonn Dimling, of Nielsen Media, read the final, most critical volume in his room in a Northbrook, Illinois, Holiday Inn. "I was about as depressed as I've ever been," he told me. "Even though I was prepared for everything they were going to say, seeing it all, just one thing after another—you think, 'My God, what have we done?'"

To make matters worse, a few months later Nielsen reported the sharp declines in some audience segments which so troubled the networks. Viewers disappeared. In particular, kids failed to show up for Saturday-morning cartoons. Drove of viewers in key segments deserted the prime-time hours. The declines were so steep, so unexpected, that they caused an immediate combined loss to the networks of about \$200 million, the value of commercial time the networks had to cough up to make good on previously arranged audience guarantees.

In the months following, the networks launched an attack on Nielsen unprecedented for its ferocity. The assault, however, drew attention to what may have been the most significant revelation of the CONTAM report: how devilishly complex this business of measuring America's TV audience has become. Ronald Kessler, the program director of the prestigious Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan, and both a critic and a closet admirer of Nielsen, thinks that Nielsen's ability to produce any ratings at all is something of a minor miracle. "If you look inside what Nielsen does, it is absolutely

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mind-boggling," he says. "Push any door and you find unbelievable detail."

At the same time, he added, "little errors mount up like crazy in a thing like this."

Choosing Nielsen Families

I DON'T KNOW ANY NIELSEN FAMILIES. I HAVE NEVER met a member of a Nielsen family, and to my knowledge no Nielsen families live on my block. The only person I know who even comes close to having known a Nielsen family is my wife, who recalls vague feelings of childhood envy toward a family in her neighborhood which had been recruited to the cause. At any one time about 4,000 American families are wired by Nielsen, or one for every 23,000 of the country's television-equipped households. They are a secretive bunch, under orders to keep quiet about their Nielsen status lest someone try to coerce them into a scheme to manipulate the ratings. (They are told to report any suspicious encounters.) Together they compose one of the most influential groups in America, for their viewing habits directly and immediately determine the allocation of roughly \$10 billion worth of network air time each year. A single Nielsen household, therefore, accounts for about \$2.5 million of that \$10 billion in advertising fees. Ronald Kessler puts it another way: "It's worth a television network's time to find a \$150,000 house in America that has a Nielsen meter, pay the owner \$200,000 for the house, and then tune that television set to their station a hundred percent of the time."

Broadcasters treat Nielsen's ratings as if they were exact numbers, not estimates. The networks sell about 70 percent of their prime-time advertising in what is called the up-front market, a time bazaar that opens in June, shortly after the networks announce their schedules for the following fall. Here advertisers buy big blocks of time in advance; in return the networks sell the time at a discount and guarantee that the advertisers' commercials will draw an agreed-on number of viewers. Deals are cut to the tenth of a ratings point; viewers become a commodity, sold on a cost-per-thousand (CPM) basis. An unexpected ratings dip of a single percentage point can cost a network millions of dollars in "make-goods" to satisfy the guarantees.

"As negotiations take place, deals are decided on the basis of CPM differences of pennies," CBS's David Poltrack said in a recent talk to members of the Advertising Research Foundation. Yet these negotiations, he said, ignore the range of error inherent in any statistical sample, and the far greater error in a sample as fundamentally flawed as Nielsen's. A true calculation of the room for error, he said, would "tell us that even a CPM variation of a dollar or more may not be real."

Statistical theory holds that every sample, no matter how perfect—even if everyone surveyed agreed to par-

ticipate—starts life with a built-in, or standard, error. If a single episode of, say, *Murphy Brown* earns a rating of 15, the standard error is six tenths of a ratings point in either direction, according to Edward Schillmoeller, Nielsen Media's chief statistician. The episode has roughly a 68 percent chance of having an audience size between 15.6 and 14.4, and a 32 percent chance of having an audience that falls outside those limits.

This level of accuracy, however, applies only in ideal, textbook conditions, not in the rough-and-tumble world of surveying people, where the degree of error may be far greater.

Nonetheless, small changes in ratings affect even programming decisions. Poltrack told his audience, "Programs are canceled or shifted around the schedule after a four-week ratings trend is provided, even though differences between the points in the trend line may not be significant. In short, we have ignored the weak foundation of our television measurement system. . . ."

Daily ratings intensify this false sense of precision. "We could probably do without daily ratings," Poltrack told me during an interview in his office last April. They tend, he said, to shorten the already short-range perspective of his industry. The networks, faced with shrinking audiences and rising costs, have little patience. "*Murphy Brown* took three years to be a hit," he said. "This is a mentality where if you're not a hit in four weeks, we take you off and put something else on."

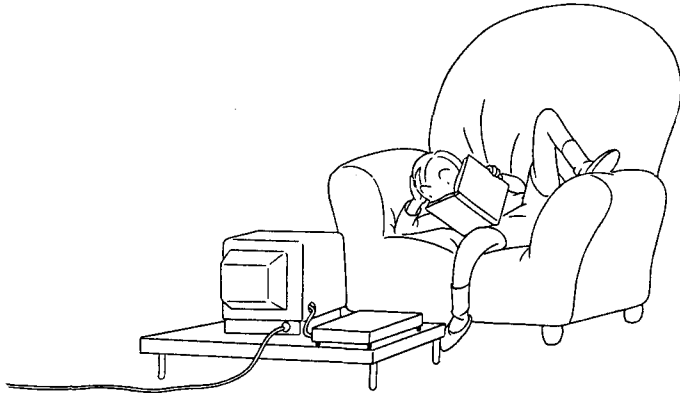
Having said this, however, he tipped back his chair and began flipping through a set of Nielsen overnights that had just arrived on his desk. "There's always *something* interesting," he said. He turned to the ratings for the previous Friday and cited that night's episode of the CBS series *Dallas*. "*Dallas* has been going up in the ratings for us, and *Dallas* is going to have its last telecast ever in a couple of weeks. We want to see if there's any momentum building. And sure enough"—he pointed to the page—" *Dallas* is up again in the ratings, a good sign there's some momentum."

The news about another show was less sanguine. He turned to Thursday's revised ratings. CBS had recently introduced a lackluster stopgap series called *The Antagonists* opposite NBC's top-rated comic juggernaut, *Cheers*.

"The first couple of weeks it got okay ratings," Poltrack said. "We were waiting very anxiously to see what the show did when *Cheers* went into repeats."

That previous Thursday a fresh *Antagonists* had aired against the first *Cheers* repeat of the season. Nonetheless, *Cheers* got an 18.8 rating, or a 31 share; *The Antagonists* got only an 8.1 rating, for a 13 share.

"It didn't go up at all," he said. "That's bad news, because the rating was not high enough to represent success for the show, and the fact it didn't go up at all . . ." He stopped, and let the thought—and the show, as it happens—hang. *The Antagonists* didn't make it to this season's schedule.



By tracking the audience on a second-by-second basis, Nielsen's passive meter may yield the first accurate ratings of commercials—not shows, commercials.

Ratings have attained a certain psychic precision as well. A fraction of a point can mean the difference between a producer's being considered a winner or a loser, and in television the distinction matters. "It's not the reality, it's the perception," says Bonny Dore, a successful producer of TV movies and miniseries, such as *Sins* and *Glory! Glory!* "If the perception is you lost—you lost," she says. And that perception can affect negotiations for a producer's next deal—"or whether you *get* another deal."

"Does it bother you," I asked, "that Nielsen's ratings are so flawed?"

"You're simply feeding into every nightmare a producer's ever had. We work and slave and go into debt and we do something wonderful, and the numbers are, quote, 'a little disappointing.' Then to find out that maybe they're off by five share points? You just want to go kill yourself. Other than that," she said, laughing, "it's fine."

Where Statistical Sampling Goes Wrong

AT ITS VERY BEST, STATISTICAL SAMPLING IS fraught with problems. The initial response rate for the 1990 census was the lowest in history, even though all we had to do was fill out a single questionnaire, and are required by law to do it. Nielsen runs a huge, continuous, partly automated survey of America twenty-four hours a day, 365 days a year, and intrudes on the daily life of each recruit for two years at a stretch.

In the real world, as Nielsen has found, sampling is hell.

The process begins with the creation every ten years of a "sample frame," the population of households in America from which all Nielsen families are selected. First, using Census Bureau data, Edward Schillmoeller's department divides the country into successively smaller hunks of territory until at last it has a collection of some 5,000 "block groups," or units of census geography comprising on average about 425 housing units each. Next, Nielsen sends squads of field agents into each of these block groups to count every housing unit, both to account for any changes in the number of homes since the Census Bureau made its report and to note the addresses of po-

tential Nielsen candidates. The crews merely count, until they reach a number selected at random by Schillmoeller's department. Assume there are indeed 425 homes in a block group. Nielsen picks a random number from 1 to 425. If the number is 125, the enumerator counts the first 124 homes without jotting down a single address. The next housing unit, be it a cave, tree, or converted beer truck, is the primary target household, a "Basic" in Nielsen-speak. This is the home Nielsen most dearly wants to recruit, and the one that sampling theory dictates Nielsen indeed *must* recruit. If the house is vacant, or even a vacant slab in a trailer park, Nielsen will keep coming back for five years in hopes that someone will have moved in.

In theory, every household has an equal shot at becoming a Nielsen family; in practice, however, the odds for some of us are zero. Nielsen would never allow me to be a member of its sample, because I am "occupationally disqualified," as are all my fellow journalists, every editor, producer, and advertising executive, and of course every single employee of CBS, NBC, ABC, CNN, MTV, local television stations, and Arbitron. The presumption is that we could not be trusted to behave ourselves and at the first opportunity would rush out and write about the experience or tune our TVs to the stations we work for. (Nielsen has good reason to worry: station employees included by chance in diary panels have been known to "load up" the diaries with their own stations' programs.) Nielsen also builds in demographic safety valves to avoid the unlikely but statistically possible selection of an aberrant sample—say, 4,000 black households. Such an occurrence might delight the networks, given that black families watch half again as much television as their nonblack peers, but would not do much for Nielsen's statistical credibility.

Today's people meter demands a lot from its hosts. Arthur Nielsen, Sr., wrote in 1955 that one of the beauties of the Audimeter system was that it operated "entirely automatically and outside the collaborating family's day-to-day awareness." Today's meter is a nagging shrew, consisting of three components: a computer the size of a compact-disc player, known as the home unit; a smaller box with a numerical keypad and a faceplate of

red and green lights, which sits atop the TV set; and a remote control, typically with eight numbered buttons and an "OK" button. Nielsen assigns a button to everyone in a household, even children as young as two. And everyone, even the two-year-old, is expected to behave in appropriate Nielsen fashion—that is, to press his button whenever he starts to watch TV and whenever he stops. Visitors pick an unoccupied button, enter their sex and age on the numerical keypad, and then also report their arrivals and departures. When a viewer punches in, the lights associated with his number change from red to green. Periodically the meter demands a little reassurance that someone is indeed watching, and will blink a single red bulb at the far right of the set-top box. One press of the "OK" button calms the machine. The longer the prompt goes unanswered, however, the more adamant the meter becomes, blinking its bulbs in an increasingly frenzied manner until it is ablaze with flashing lights, like the scene of a midnight car wreck. Some meters finally cry out in frustration, emitting a pained and disappointed beep.

Volunteers also subject their homes to a lot of drilling and wiring. Nielsen requires that every single TV set, VCR, and cable converter be metered and connected to the home unit. Any satellite dish has to be metered separately with an "inclinometer" that records which way, and thus at which satellite, the dish is pointing. Nielsen even takes an inventory of unused TVs kept in the attic or basement. Nielsen's agents don't simply accept a homeowner's assurance that a set won't be used. They have him swear to it in an affidavit, and then attach a small plastic seal to the prongs of the plug. If on a return visit the agent finds the seal broken, he will ask permission to meter the set; if he isn't allowed to, he may eject the family from the sample.

Today's typical Nielsen home, says Larry Patterson, the company's director of field operations, has two TVs, one VCR, and one cable converter, requiring an array of equipment that takes five or six hours to install. The most complex house he has come across had six TVs, five VCRs, and cable access; installing the meters took two full days.

In return for all this equipping and pestering, each family can pick gifts from a Nielsen catalogue and gets cash payments of two dollars a month for each TV or VCR in the house. A household with one TV would get just \$24 a year; the family with the complex system mentioned above would get \$264.

The networks worry that the burden is too great, that Nielsen families experience "button fatigue" and begin engaging in such inappropriate behaviors as failing to log in, or letting a visitor *just sit there* without first registering his age and presence. CONTAM conducted exit interviews with families leaving the Nielsen stable and found that one out of three reported getting tired of the meter; half of these said that as a result accuracy had suffered. More

than one in ten said they "hardly ever" logged out when they finished watching a show.

The networks fear that button fatigue is especially pronounced among children. Almost half the kids (or their parental spokespeople) interviewed by CONTAM said that they did indeed get tired of pushing buttons. Nielsen takes great pains to win their cooperation. It gives them a Nielsen coloring book and shows them a video called "The Nielsen People Meter Show." Nielsen wants kids to bond to their buttons, and practices some subtle human engineering. It gives them a choice of animal stickers to place next to their buttons—but not commercial figures like Donald Duck or the Ninja Turtles, of course, because these might bias their viewing behavior.

Nielsen assigns the youngest child button No. 1 and works up from there by age. It does this to avoid button "churn," the shuffling of meter slots as people join or leave the household. Nielsen wants the oldest person on the highest button because of the cold actuarial fact that this person is the likeliest to die and leave a disorienting gap in the panel.

Who would agree to invite such an imperious guest into their homes? Far too few people, as it happens. In a typical week only about 48 percent of the households installed and on line are Basics, according to CONTAM. Such a low rate of cooperation makes statisticians queasy; it could be an indicator of a fundamental difference between those who do cooperate and those who don't. The question is, how does this affect viewing patterns? An early CONTAM study, conducted in 1964 in response to the congressional investigations, found that those who cooperated watched somewhat more TV than non-cooperators. The networks claim that the people meter has reversed the pattern—that now people who don't cooperate are the heaviest network watchers.

Nielsen's cooperation rate is actually far worse than 48 percent. In its routine disclosures the company reports only the percentage of Basics who refuse to participate, and doesn't mention the number of "Alternates" it had to approach before achieving its 4,000-household sample. In fact, Nielsen must approach three Alternates, on average, before it finds a willing participant. In some cases, according to Schillmoeller, recruiters have had to approach up to thirty additional homes.

Moreover, on any given day about 10 percent of Nielsen's people-meter households produce faulty data that cannot be included in the daily ratings calculations. The families most likely to be excluded, CONTAM discovered, were the heaviest viewers, reflecting a Catch-22 phenomenon literally engineered into the people-meter system: the more TVs and VCRs and Nielsen equipment you have, the greater the chance something will happen to bump your data from the day's tabulations.

Fatigue causes some families to drop out of the sample altogether. Other households leave for quirkier reasons:



You want to see everything. Maybe bring something back
so you remember it all. Now if you could just find a few nice stores.
Ah, there's one. And another. And...

THE CARD.
THE AMERICAN EXPRESS® CARD.

Call 1-800-THE CARD, to apply.



THERE'S A PLACE IN THIS WORLD FOR UNUSUAL PEOPLE.

ADELPHI.

Approximately 12.6 million high school seniors will be applying to college this year.

Approximately six or seven hundred of them look at this magazine every now and then.

Approximately fifty or sixty check out the ads.

And maybe four or five, at best, bother reading them.

Congratulations. You're part of that last group. This is an ad for you.

Being significantly different from the average American high school student, perhaps you'll be interested in a significantly different university:

A school that questions the value of a typical 20th century college education as much as you probably do, and a school that attempts to provide answers to your questions with questions of its own.

And a school whose ads, instead of blathering on and on, simply invite you to learn more by calling the number below.

We sincerely hope all four or five of you flood us with replies.

ADELPHI UNIVERSITY For more information call 1-800-ADELPHI.

one family bought a slick new TV and didn't want Nielsen's installers tinkering with it. Larry Patterson lost another Nielsen household to one of the cold realities of ghetto life in New York City. He and a partner had recruited an elderly woman living in a tough housing project in the borough of Queens. Early the following week he got a call from a city homicide detective who told him that the woman had been found strangled in her bed the previous Sunday morning. He requested all the woman's viewing records for Saturday night, in case they held some clue to the timing of her murder.

She had turned off the set at 11:23 P.M. on Saturday, Patterson found. But he also discovered a curious thing: someone had watched a lot of television in the woman's apartment the Sunday afternoon after she'd been killed.

The detective was silent a moment. "Oh, yeah," he said. "That was us. We were watching the football game."

"For him, at least," Patterson told me, "it certainly confirmed our credibility."

Readings from America's 4,000 people-metered households are automatically transmitted every night from 3:00 A.M. to about 7:00 A.M. Florida time, the machines dutifully calling home to Nielsen's Dunedin Center. Most people assume that the people meter alone produces all the information Nielsen needs for its ratings. In fact this nightly torrent of data is by itself utterly useless.

The meter tells only who is watching the TV set and how the set is tuned. Nielsen must merge this data with a second torrent of information, the detailed records of exactly what programs appeared on thousands upon thousands of TV stations and cable "headends" around the country—not what the stations planned to broadcast but what they actually did broadcast, and the exact times at which they did so.

On any day the task is monumental: The networks supply Nielsen with their daily lineups, but typically these succumb to special reports, late-running baseball games, natural disasters, and so forth—regional events that might cause an affiliate to interrupt the network "feed." Nielsen keeps track of all this by stationing robotic TV watchers in the TV markets where Nielsen families reside to watch television twenty-four hours a day, *forever*. They watch for a basic network signal, hidden from human viewers, that indicates when the network feed is being broadcast by an affiliate. If the signal arrives at its scheduled time, Nielsen assumes that all is well. Any discrepancy is called a conflict. In a typical week Nielsen's program-records department in Dunedin will resolve 12,000 to 15,000 such conflicts, often by calling stations to find out just exactly what did air. During the first week of the Gulf War, Nielsen confronted 50,000 conflicts and in the process exposed a bit of affiliate treachery. A few stations had dumped their network feeds to broadcast CNN instead.

CONTAM factored together all the forces tending to re-

duce cooperation and the supply of usable data, and determined that Nielsen's people-meter sample had a final net response rate of only 37 percent, meaning that only 37 percent of Nielsen's originally targeted Basics produced usable household data on any given day—a rate "below all industry or government standards for high quality operations," CONTAM reported. "The rate has declined steadily over recent years and indications are that, unless a different effort is introduced, it will continue to do so. At some point . . . a totally different measurement approach will have to be considered."

The New Passive People Meter

"AS YOU CAN SEE, THIS IS YOUR TYPICAL LIVING room," said Christopher Lubniewski, a Nielsen client-service representative, in a recent interview. The room was a barren, windowless office in Nielsen Media's executive headquarters in New York. Nielsen's new passive people meter, a squat black box the size of a videocassette recorder, was perched before me on the shelf of an incongruous breakfront, the only thing even remotely living-room-like.

The machine and I had already been introduced—that is, it had scanned me and then stored four images of my face: three head-on portraits and one quarter-profile. It was now ready to try matching the real me to these digital mug shots.

If it succeeded, it would display on a nearby video screen my name and a number indicating how confident it was about the identification. A number and no name would mean that it had failed. I did not want a zero. A zero would be a pretty good indicator that I had died or at least stopped breathing. A number from 60 to 83 would mean that I was a person, although not someone the meter knew. Anything higher would mean that it knew me well enough to display my name.

The meter scans the room every two seconds, looking for signs of life. It compares each fresh image in a given location with its predecessor to produce a digital representation of movement, the hallmark of humanness. A life-size photograph brought into the room might fool the system for a moment, Lubniewski told me, but over the next few scans its lack of movement would cause the meter to ignore it.

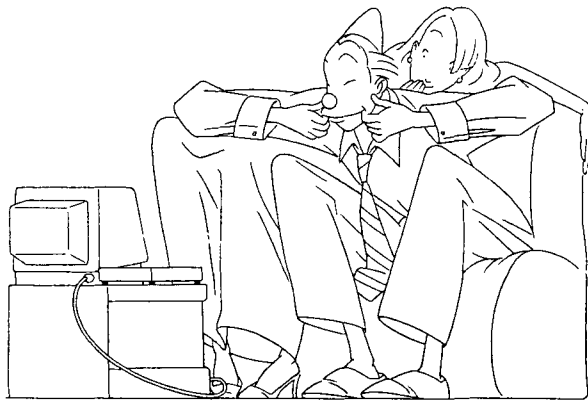
The system next locates the melange of digits most resembling those for a human head, a search program that may at last help Nielsen separate the men from the dogs. "If a cat or a big dog jumped up here," Lubniewski said, "the system would scan it and try to find the head, and during the match-off would give it a score of zero to sixty." A nonhuman moving object.

The machine notices every departure and return. Its reliance on head-on or nearly head-on views, moreover, means that it will not count people who are present but

involved in other activities, such as reading the newspaper or making love on the floor.

The machine gets good but deeply qualified reviews.

"It's very accurate," Robert A. Warrens, a senior vice-president and the director of media resources and research for J. Walter Thompson USA, told me not long ago. "I sat in a room in different positions and overall it was able to pick me up a hundred percent." But many who have seen the meter worry that it could worsen Nielsen's already poor cooperation rate, especially given today's heightened concern for privacy. "We know that one out of every two households has a TV in one or more bedrooms," says Nicholas P. Schiavone, NBC's vice-president of media and marketing research, and the current chairman of CON-TAM. "Now, I come to your home and tell you I'm going to set up a recognition meter in every room of your household where there's a TV. Will people allow a device that can recognize—that can *see*—into those rooms?"



Nielsen installed a nonfunctioning version in a group of Nielsen homes to see if their occupants, led to believe the system really worked, would indeed accept a camera-like device in their living rooms, bedrooms, even bathrooms (where one percent of American families currently have a TV). The answer, apparently, is a qualified yes.

The thing could appear in viewers' homes fairly soon. William G. Jacobi, Nielsen Media's president and chief operating officer, told me he'd "be disappointed if the passive meter were not playing a role in the rating system within the next three years."

If the meter works, it will solve Nielsen's problem of button fatigue. One school of thought holds that the passive meter could even improve initial cooperation rates by eliminating the workload associated with the current people meter. It would do nothing, however, to help Nielsen keep up with the proliferation of miniature portable TVs and track the ranks of so-called "out-of-home" viewers, the great uncounted masses who watch television while on vacation, in hotels, away at college, or on the job. To help meet these challenges, Nielsen's Dunedin researchers are experimenting with a pocket-sized electronic "diary" that people would, in theory, whip out to record the shows they watch in bars and elsewhere. They are also testing ways by which various

pieces of Nielsen equipment could communicate with one another through the ordinary plugs and circuits of a house, thereby eliminating the need to run so many wires through homes. Moreover, Nielsen recently hired its first chief research officer, a kind of research cop, to study Nielsen's existing rating methods and look for simple ways to improve them.

The passive meter, however, is the thing Nielsen most likes to show off. "Try moving your chair backward and forward," Chris Lubniewski suggested. The meter registered my identity with scores of about 90.

Lubniewski took a seat in an adjacent wheeled chair and together we kicked our way throughout the meter's field of vision. It named us both. I tried covering the top half of my head with a legal pad, something I often do when I watch TV. The machine hesitated. I was a person, all right, but it couldn't say who.

Changes in hairstyle won't throw the meter, Lub-

"It scans the room every one or two seconds. You could fool it, but chances are if it misses you—if you sneeze or make a face—we'll still know you're there."

niewski said—although he did mention a recent exception. "One woman came in here wearing her hair very tight," he said. "She let it go and it fell in front of her face, and the system *did* get confused."

This could be forgiven, I decided. In a similar situation I'd have felt likewise—but what about shaving a moustache? No effect, Lubniewski said; someone had tried it.

I asked Nielsen's public-relations man, sitting nearby, if I could borrow his glasses. The machine named me with its highest score yet.

It was time to get serious. Man to machine. I stuck out my tongue, yanked back the corners of my mouth, and closed one eye, a maneuver I picked up from my three-year-old daughter.

Lubniewski smiled, but the smile looked thin to me; it masked, I was certain, the kind of ennui that can come only from watching armies of otherwise sober people suddenly let down their hair or flourish surprise pairs of glasses.

"A lot of people try to fool the system," Lubniewski said. "You have to remember, it scans the room every one or two seconds. You could fool it, but chances are if it misses you—if you sneeze or make a face—we'll still know you're there."

BACARDI BURSTS VODKA'S BUBBLE IN TASTE TEST.

And we did it in head-to-head competition.

We went directly to vodka & tonic drinkers, in vodka's top ten markets. And in a blind taste test, more than half of them chose the taste of Bacardi® rum & tonic over their usual vodka & tonic.

Amazing? Not really, when you consider how the smooth, lively character of Puerto Rican rum goes so well with the bubbly refreshment of tonic.

So make your own taste test. And see how the taste of Bacardi rum & tonic makes small potatoes of vodka.



Bacardi rum. Made in Puerto Rico.



RUMS OF PUERTO RICO

I smiled past my fingers but held the pose a bit longer, just to make sure the system got it. It identified me as human, but otherwise didn't recognize me.

Satisfied, I tucked in my tongue.

An instant later, the monitor displayed my name with a cautious score of 85.

What Lies Ahead

A TRUE PASSIVE METER IS ALMOST CERTAIN TO APPEAR over the next few years. Barring the unexpected arrival of a new challenger, that meter will function like the one I saw demonstrated in Nielsen's offices. In the past, fundamental advances in ratings technology have brought far-reaching change to the business and culture of television. What changes will this meter bring? What revelations about the audience-holding power of commercials? Of TV itself?

History is full of broad hints about the awful truth: plunging water pressure in Toledo, the DynaScopic chronicles of TV sex in Oklahoma. The best indications of what lies ahead, however, come from the deployment of near-passive meters here and in France. In 1987 R. D. Percy & Company, a now-defunct ratings concern, installed an infrared body sensor in 609 homes, and demonstrated that television sets played to empty rooms about 13 percent of the time. The proportion climbed sharply for certain categories of shows. Golf commentators, for example, spent 20 percent of their time whispering stroke-by-strokes to unoccupied couches and chairs. Viewers abandoned *Good Morning America* and *Today* for roughly twelve minutes out of every hour. During commercials the absentee rate as much as doubled.

French advertisers recently got a look at commercial avoidance. In France, Mediametrie holds a virtual monopoly over TV ratings. In 1989, however, a challenger, Telemetric, deployed a form of passive meter called Motivac, which detects the presence of people by sensing motion, just as Nielsen's does. Its ability to identify viewers, however, depends on the fact that the French watch TV the way Americans did back in the 1960s—that is, with the whole family gathered in favorite seats around a single TV. Viewers must provide Motivac with detailed information about their TV-watching habits, including where they most like to sit. If Motivac finds a person in that *chaise favorite*, it checks its memory for the likely occupant.

Motivac provides Telemetric's clients with a moment-by-moment "spike graph" of the nation's viewing; it proved with dismaying immediacy that vast numbers of viewers flee prime-time shows during commercials and the final credits. It found, for example, that a collection of commercials broadcast during a World Cup soccer match triggered a virtual stampede from the living rooms of France, with the TV audience suddenly shrinking from 9 million to 3.5 million. Telemetric also discovered that

high ratings garnered by French news shows during the Gulf War were deceptive. Viewers gathered only at the beginning of each broadcast, to catch the headlines, and then left the TV on and went about their business elsewhere in the home.

Such news here could cause an immediate restructuring of the pricing of advertising time. No advertiser believes that everyone stays for the commercials, of course, but a second-by-second measure of audience size would at long last document the rate of desertion. Advertisers would discover that some shows hold their audiences more tenaciously during commercial breaks than others. For most of my friends, the Super Bowl is a big beer-and-popcorn event, but the half-life of beer in the human body is known to be brief. Suppose advertisers discover that most of America flees to the bathroom during those ultra-expensive bowl spots?

Commercial ratings might bring an element of justice to television. At last advertising agencies would find themselves subject to the same ratings tyranny that producers and TV writers have had to endure all these years. Suddenly agencies, too, would find their Nielsen rank published in *Variety* and *The Los Angeles Times*. Think of the implications—now *commercials* could be canceled!

Second-by-second ratings, however, could lash the creative content of shows even more tightly to the numbers. The new ratings would provide programming executives with an unprecedented ability to tinker with the content and structure of television shows. "It is conceivable," John Dimling told me recently, "that if you literally had second-by-second or minute-by-minute ratings, you'd know what people in a given demographic group tend to leave the program at what point in time. The use of that information in making programs could be kind of mind-boggling. You could do a content analysis of the program, and relate the content to when people tend to leave, or when they come back. Or if they come back. It may turn out that a certain point in the story or a certain production technique tends to interest people or not interest people."

Suppressing a chill, I asked, "You mean one could rate individual characters? Even subplots?"

"Sure, sure," he said, without an instant's hesitation.

If Nielsen now stands on a threshold, so does television itself. Ratings began simply as a way for advertisers to prove to themselves that radio and television could help them reach masses of consumers. The numbers soon took on a life all their own and an authority they were never meant to have. They became the soul of television. But when is enough enough? How much information is too much information? Does TV now risk snuffing the last ember of creativity under a yet huger cascade of deceptively precise numbers? Before Nielsen takes that next great technological leap, I'd like to invoke the old FTC warning: Even at their best, Nielsen's ratings will always be estimates. They will always be "inherently imperfect." □

THE SEASONS



MASTER, MASTER, LORD OF THE DANCE

I follow the fox's trail
of drifting chicken feathers
into deep snow,
across the stock pond with the early sun
frozen in its eye.

Where the forest turns up the mountain
I hesitate:
as I left the house,
your kiss was full of tongue
and you held four cold, brown-speckled eggs
to my cheek;

on the other hand
the fox now has two of our six laying hens
and his courage is like a dark-eyed woman
coming in broad daylight
to steal the heart of a man.

As I turn back over the frozen pond
you top the low hill from the house,
running the snowy field to meet me;
your breath streams in your dark hair.
Two feathers blow across the ice
dancing in their early morning ecstasy.

—*Red Hawk*

REAL WONDER

In the stunned little interval
Between winter and spring,
Like the held gasp of surprise
Preceding real wonder,
I'm a flashlight in daylight.

Green stirs low down and shows
Through dead blond shocks of grass,
And gray aspen flowers dangle
Above old snowbanks:
I go around like a feral saint.

The timber hoards
Its meager crust of snow.
I used to walk over the hill
To visit my neighbor
About now,

Just because he was still alive
After another winter.

We'd look out the window
At the groggy meadow,
Not much to say by the end.

This year my neighbor is dead
So I walk the hill anyway.
There's his dead house.
There's his dead fence.
The timber hoards

Its meager crust of snow.
I'm a gunnysack of gravel.
I'm sudden as a gust of light.
This is just
The stunned little interval

After another winter,
The held gasp of surprise
Preceding real wonder.

—*James Galvin*

SPRING FEVER

We begin now our interior life, the life
of the mind I'm tempted to say, but
that's a fabrication: we're driven in
by the flowering plum, the lilac,

the early April greens sending their brilliant
toxins to flame and stagger over the delicate
sclera of the eye, to sheet
like tearing silk down the throat

swanned in an arch to clear a breathing
space, now that breathing's a conscious thing.
We swell and dwindle
on a histamine tide,

the bone bowl around a sea that hesitates
to finally overtake us, though it drives out
or subsumes nearly everything,
obligations and errands,

the small spiny creatures of the day.
Not that we're ungrateful
for these walled-in glooms and
filtering machines, the pharmacopoeia

of everyday life that allows us
some measure of perception. We can see
in fact that our debility
is minor, perhaps even a privilege,

a god's eye warding off tubercles
and metastasis—a seasonal and temporary
strangulation whose recurrence
we can count on

as on little else in the world, a little luck
choking and stinging its way into our heads
where the welcome lies
disguised as tears.

—Lynne McMahon

COUNTRY PURSUITS

A horseshoe's a brute weight
Nailed to a hoof between the farrier's knees,
Or flung with fine insouciance at a stake.
It can notch a scar, someone's boozy scoring.

At one wedding barbecue, combing the grass
Under the borrowed headlights of a truck,
As the last guest rocked and lurched along
the drive,
The groom stepped back to stumble on his luck.

—Anne Rouse

FEAR THE SEASON

This morning we are warned about the heat.
My sheets are damp. The radio is hot.
Trucks screaming strip the gear box as they brake.
The window sashes shake. Four bombs were dropped
at Dearborn and Monroe in garbage bins.
Skateboards rumble on the fierce concrete.
An unknown boy was hit by a full train.
He's in a clinic being sponged and drained.
Noon will ascend in nauseating heat

ticking to the rhythms of a bike
whose sharp spokes whirl and shimmer insect-like.
Its rider, furious in torn nylon, grins,
confirming that there's more than heat to fear.

—Mary Kinzie

WHITE FLOWERS

Last night
in the fields
I lay down in the darkness
to think about death,
but instead I fell asleep,
as if in a vast and sloping room
filled with those white flowers
that open all summer,
sticky and untidy,
in the warm fields.
When I woke
the morning light was just slipping
in front of the stars,
and I was covered
with blossoms.
I don't know
how it happened—
I don't know
if my body went diving down
under the sugary vines
in some sleep-sharpened affinity
with the depths, or whether
that green energy
rose like a wave
and curled over me, claiming me
in its husky arms.
I pushed them away, but I didn't rise.
Never in my life had I felt so plush,
or so slippery,
or so resplendently empty.
Never in my life
had I felt myself so near
that porous line
where my own body was done with
and the roots and the stems and the flowers
began.

—Mary Oliver

THRESHOLD

How the day turns in the angular woods.
Not a gust.
A gold, fastidious light slides waist-deep
and ascends through the trees
as the mercury drops. We discern,
among the hierarchies of branch and cloud,
the circle we inhabit—open-roofed, visited
by owls—
and imagine ourselves watched from above.
Precarious radiance
frames the skylit world, the soft catkins
that hang from the alders. We sit at the edge
of stillness;
and a few frogs begin to call, one to another,
with a ragged scintillance
in the whiteness of water at dusk: blue-
white, except where the shadows stipulate.
Look, there are stepping-stones;
I think our minds hold nothing but this world
reflected,
and we can cross above the early stars
into the mantle of the pine woods—
our hands and faces luminous in the bending
darkness—
vulnerable as a summer porch the moths get in,
the door ajar.

—Barbara Jordan

A Short Story



The Other Widow

by Marly Swick

IN THE TWO MONTHS SINCE DAVID'S SUDDEN death, Lynne has stopped eating, started wearing nothing but black, and found herself a therapist in the Yellow Pages. She has never had much faith in therapy—all that high-priced crying over spilt milk—but she felt she had no choice: she is afraid that if she doesn't talk to someone about David, she will go crazy and wind up in a mental hospital, shuffling around in bedroom slippers, zombied out on lithium, weaving potholders, while her six-year-old son, Kyle, gets shunted from one abusive foster home to the next. As a lapsed Catholic, she knows that you pay for your sins, and she is paying ninety dollars an hour, which she can ill afford, in order to talk to someone, someone who has sworn a professional oath of confidentiality, about her clandestine affair with a married man who was about to leave his wife for her when he suddenly dropped dead of a heart attack, at the age of thirty-eight, during a game of racquetball.

Rockville, California, is a small town populated by people with big mouths—sometimes she can't believe what intimate details she has learned, through the grapevine, about some people with whom she has barely exchanged two words—and she feels that she owes it to David to keep their secret. Even if it bankrupts and kills her. Which she thinks it might. The only thing more painful than grief, she has discovered, is hidden grief. She feels like a closed coffin. Every night she cries herself to sleep, muffling her mouth with a pillow so that her son, in the next room, won't hear her. Frequently, after she has cried herself out, she takes her sodden pillow and crawls into bed with Kyle, finding some comfort in his warm, restless little body. If it weren't for Kyle—feeding him his Cheerios every morning and giving him his bath every evening, the daily rituals of care and maintenance—she might have killed herself by now.

Whenever the therapist, a woman about her own age named Eleanor, tries to steer the talk back to Lynne's parents—doing her therapist thing—Lynne returns po-

lately but firmly to the topic of David. She figures that she can talk to anyone, any time, for nothing, about her parents, but she can talk only to Eleanor about David. She is paying Eleanor to listen to her talk about David, about the intimate details of their private relationship, the way a girlfriend would under other circumstances. She thinks of Eleanor as a sort of overpaid, overqualified girlfriend.

A lot of the younger, hipper doctors in town have offices in renovated Victorians in the small downtown area, and Eleanor's office happens to be just one block from the building in which David's wife, David's *widow*—the very word gives Lynne the chills—has her office. Fortunately, Rockville Realty, where Lynne works, is located two blocks in the opposite direction, so that when she walks from work to her therapy appointment, she is not likely to run into Rachel. In fact, in the five weeks she has been coming to Eleanor's office on Thursday afternoons, she has never once so much as glimpsed the back of Rachel's head, or even her car, a cantaloupe-colored Karmann Ghia. Even so, every time she leaves or enters Eleanor's office, she cannot help glancing in the direction of Rachel's building, half hoping and half dreading that she will see her.

*The only thing more
painful than grief, she has discovered,
is hidden grief*

So it came as a complete, heart-pounding shock to turn the corner at the Alpha Beta supermarket this noon, shopping for a few essentials on her lunch hour, and near-

ly ram Rachel with her cart. They greeted each other like long-lost friends—Lynne had sold David and Rachel their house when they moved to Rockville from the city about this time last year—and Lynne somehow managed to mumble her condolences, which she couldn't very well *not* do under the circumstances. Rachel thanked her, and Lynne glanced at her watch and gasped, as if she were late for an appointment, and was about to make her getaway when Rachel suddenly reached out and rested a hand on Lynne's forearm and said, "This is actually a stroke of luck. I was going to call you later today anyway." She paused to sigh and rearrange the few items in her cart. Lynne noted that all the items in Rachel's cart



were sophisticated and adult—yogurt, Brie, a jar of olives, chutney, something leafy that could be cilantro or maybe watercress—while her own cart contained peanut butter, apple juice, Teddy Grahams, and Popsicles. They were standing by the freezer case, and Lynne felt a paralyzing stab of pain as Rachel opened the glass door and casually tossed a pint of ice cream into her cart which Lynne recognized as David's favorite: Häagen-Dazs Vanilla Swiss Almond. It was her favorite, too, but she had not been able to touch the stuff since his death.

"I need to put the house on the market," Rachel said as she slammed the freezer door. "I can't afford it now that—" She let the sentence trail off.

Lynne nodded sympathetically, at a total loss for words. Finally she looked at her watch again and managed to stutter something to the effect that she would give Rachel a call later that evening.

"Do you have the number?" Rachel called after her as she hurried down the aisle. Lynne turned and said, "I must have it at the office," feeling the color rise to her cheeks as she thought of all the times she had called David at home while Rachel was at work and how indelibly the number was imprinted on her brain. She imagined that she would be able to summon it from the recesses of her memory on her deathbed even if she lived to be a hundred and suffered from Alzheimer's. At the

check-out counter Lynne's hands trembled so violently that she had difficulty writing a check, and she grabbed her bag and fled to her parked car and drove directly to a pay phone and called Eleanor and begged for an emergency appointment.

And now, an hour later, she is sitting across from Eleanor, crying into a tissue, recounting blow by blow the unsettling encounter in the supermarket, when she should be out showing the McNairs' split-level on Sunnyslope Road to the Shimonos, when she should be out trying to make money instead of spending a dollar and a half a minute talking to a woman who merely nods her head a lot and who Lynne increasingly suspects is gay and therefore, despite all her advanced degrees, probably understands what Lynne is going through, has *been* through, no better than your average woman on the street.

"I don't believe this. It's so incredibly ironic." Lynne blows her nose and attempts a little laugh. "She actually wants me to sell their house." She shakes her head in disbelief.

When Lynne pauses to allow Eleanor to say something appropriately psychological, there is a long, loud silence. Lynne hates silences like this; they make her feel as if she is paying for nothing, for air.

"Of course I'll tell her no," Lynne says anxiously when she realizes that Eleanor is not going to comment. "I'll make up some excuse."

Eleanor nods. Most of her nods seem noncommittal, as in "I see," but this nod seems to convey a note of approval, as in "Good girl," and Lynne immediately feels relieved, like a conscientious student who has divined the right answer. She knows that Eleanor thinks she needs to put David behind her and get on with her life. She suspects that although Eleanor pretends to be sympathetic, she really thinks that David was just another chauvinist schmuck, untrustworthy to the max, who would have broken her heart one way or the other, sooner or later, alive or dead, and that she should consider herself well rid of him.

"Okay, then," Lynne says, "that's what I'll do. I'll call her tonight and tell her. I'll say I'm just too busy and I'll refer her to Dwayne Higgins." She looks slyly at Eleanor, who laughs on cue. Dwayne is a pathetic macho desperado who wears pointy cowboy boots and one of those Texas string ties with a Lucite clasp that has a dead scorpion trapped inside, and who is always coming on to her, making suggestive comments and brushing up against her in the office.

Eleanor looks pointedly at the little clock on the table beside her, and Lynne obediently pops up out of her chair and says politely, "I appreciate your taking me on such short notice."

"No problem," Eleanor says. "See you Thursday." Then, as she does at the end of every session, she cradles Lynne's hand in both of hers for a moment, as if to pump

sanity into her. Even though it's a bit awkward, Lynne always finds the gesture oddly comforting, and feels a pang when Eleanor lets go.

AFTER DAVID DROPPED DEAD, SHE FOUND HERSELF going to the beauty parlor every afternoon to get her hair washed, just for the feel of someone's fingers against her skin. She would call a different salon each time and tell them the same lie—she was having her bathroom remodeled, and needed to get her hair washed. Her waist-length coppery hair was her glory. Sometimes after they made love, when her hair was all tangled up, David would sit in bed and patiently, gently brush the snarls away. Once she started therapy, though, she had to economize and cut out the beauty-parlor visits. A couple of times she tried bribing Kyle to brush her hair, but he got bored and restless, and she was afraid that maybe she would warp him sexually in some way, so she abandoned that idea. Then, for the first time in her life, she started experiencing keen urges to get her hair cut off. It seemed fittingly symbolic, like cutting your losses. Once, on the one-month anniversary of David's death, Lynne called the beauty parlor she liked best and made an appointment, but then canceled it an hour later. "I'm sorry, but I'm not ready," she told the baffled receptionist. "It's just too soon."

The Shimonos, usually very punctual, are late showing up at the split-level on Sunnyslope. Mr. Shimonos, some sort of computer genius, apologizes gravely: "We lose ourselves on the way." As a result, Lynne is late getting to the elementary school and Kyle is sitting glumly alone in the fenced-in playground, waiting for her, when she pulls up. Under optimal conditions he is not a child with a sunny disposition, and now he glowers in the seat next to her, maniacally punching the radio buttons, daring her to tell him to knock it off. From the moment he was born he has had a way of making her feel inadequate and apologetic, just as his father always had. And as with his father, she feels closest to him in bed. She enjoys the bedtime ritual of crawling under the covers and reading him a book or telling him a story until he is so punch-drunk that his long dark eyelashes start to droop and she can cautiously extract herself and tiptoe out of the room.

When Kyle was just a year old, his father, Charlie, left her to move back in with his widowed mother, who had always doted on him. He left a note for Lynne detailing his reasons for this decision in perfect outline form, complete with roman numerals and capital letters, major headings and subheadings. He was a hydroelectrical engineer. The bottom line was that he preferred being a child to being a father. His mother died a year later, and he called Lynne to see whether she was interested in a reconciliation; when she told him to forget it, he accepted a transfer to Nigeria, where he has lived for the past four years, unmarried, with two servants to wait on him hand

and foot. Lynne finds it absolutely incredible that Kyle, who has spent so little time with Charlie, has somehow learned to duplicate all his absent father's idiosyncratic expressions and mannerisms so precisely. Apparently Charlie's genes have elbowed her genes aside just as he always pushed her needs aside in everyday life. It seems unfair. She is the one who has taken care of Kyle day in and day out—hailed herself out of bed when he had nightmares or a stomach ache, wiped his stinky little butt, cooked his meals, entertained him when she was dead tired—and yet her son, the flesh of her flesh, is not the least bit like her. Physically, intellectually, emotionally, he is his father's son. In fact, she would not be at all surprised to come home someday in the not so distant future and find Kyle's closet empty and a note for her on the kitchen table. *Dear Mom*, he would print neatly, *This just isn't working out*.

In an attempt to placate Kyle she shouts over the radio, "I thought we could stop and pick up a pizza," even though she has left some chicken breasts out to defrost.

"Okay," Kyle nods, as if he is merely being agreeable, but he reaches over and turns off the radio.

She puts her hand out and ruffles his silky hair, and her eyes blur with tears. For the ten months of her relationship with David, she kept picturing the three of them together as a family, doing family things—going on picnics, playing softball, camping, taking educational field trips to the city. She imagined David and Kyle assembling model airplanes or watching sports events on TV. David had always seemed willing and eager to take on the role of stepdad, assuring her that he considered Kyle a bonus, not a liability. He and Rachel wanted children, he had told her the first time they met for coffee alone, and had tried everything—all the state-of-the-art conception methods—but with no luck. He had looked so sad sitting there smiling across the table at her. She realized suddenly that he was a very good-looking man, as well as very kind and sensitive. She had liked his wife. As a realtor, she got to see people at their worst—buying a house was a stressful undertaking, and the women were generally impossible—but Rachel Bloch had always been pleasant, considerate, and reasonable. And although she was a hotshot child psychologist, she was never snobbish or superior with Lynne, who had a completely useless B.F.A. in painting in addition to a real-estate license. In spite of all this, at that moment—looking into David's sad, kind eyes looking into her own eyes—she suddenly felt protective of him, as she would of a little boy who had been sent off to school with a scanty, unnourishing breakfast and a too-thin jacket on a cold day. And after that she found herself avoiding Rachel.

As they pull into the parking lot of the pizza parlor, Kyle blesses her with one of his rare sunburst smiles of approval and says, "This was a good idea, Mom." Before she can respond, he ejects from his seat and races toward the front door. Trailing along behind him, she attempts to

console herself with the thought that she should be glad that Kyle never got the chance to know David better. She and David usually got together during the daytime, when Rachel was at work and Kyle was at school. Fortunately, David was a free-lance writer who worked at home, and she had found she could easily juggle her own schedule. So on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings and occasionally on Monday and Friday afternoons, depending on Rachel's client load, David would zip over to her apartment and they would spend a couple of hours in bed, making love and fantasizing about the future. The future. Lynne feels a hard lump lodge in her throat just as the clerk asks to take her order. She stands there mute, unable to utter a sound, until Kyle tugs impatiently on her shoulder bag. "Tell him we want a large sausage-and-mushroom," he says authoritatively. The clerk looks at Lynne, who just nods and pulls out her wallet.

AFTER THEY HAVE EATEN THE PIZZA—OR, rather, Kyle has eaten his pizza and Lynne has picked at hers—he takes off to ride his bike before bedtime, and Lynne sits in the breakfast nook and stares at the yellow wall phone, rehearsing what she is going to say. She feels sorry that Rachel has to sell the house, knowing how much work she put into restoring the place, but she also feels angry at Rachel for being so willing to relinquish this tangible shell of David's life, even if he was planning to move out. Lynne knows that if she were in Rachel's position, she would do whatever she needed to do to hang on to the house, at least for the time being. One of the things that she cries about late at night is that she has been left with so few physical remnants of David's presence in her life. A pair of gym socks, a soft pack of Carltons with one crushed cigarette, a half-empty container of Vanilla Swiss Almond in the freezer, a purple gloxinia (now dying) and a gorgeous wind chime that he gave her for her birthday. Sometimes late at night, lying in bed, when she hears the deep, melodious chimes, she feels that he is speaking to her from some other realm. She spends a lot of time lying on the bed during the day trying to conjure up certain memorable moments of passion, but although she can remember the details vividly, the physical sensations themselves remain stubbornly elusive. Except occasionally in dreams, when she can actually feel the touch of his fingers on her breast or the rhythm of him moving inside her.

He had been dead for three days before she heard about it, and she had nearly gone crazy wondering what was going on with him. When he didn't show up at her place on Friday afternoon as planned, she called his house and got the answering machine. She did not call that weekend, because she knew Rachel might answer, and anyway, she was miffed and expected him to call her and apologize. But he did not call Monday morning, and

her anger turned to worry. She called the house, and when Rachel answered, she hung up. The fact that Rachel was not at the office only made Lynne more worried. She paced around her apartment for a while wondering what she could do, and then, out of desperation more than anything else, decided to call the racquet club, where she knew David went almost every day. A young girl answered and Lynne asked for David Bloch. The girl didn't say anything for a moment and then said, "Just a minute, please," and a moment later an older man, obviously the boss, picked up the phone. And that's how she heard.

She hears a scraping crash outside and rushes to the window, adrenaline pumping. Kyle is lying spread-eagled on top of his bike, on the scraggly, burnt front lawn. Thank God he's not on the street, she thinks, as she rushes down the hallway and out the door. He is already sitting up, with his back to her, by the time she is down the front steps, and she thinks he must be okay, but when he turns around, blood is pouring from his mouth. *Oh God, oh my God*, she screams inside, trying to remain outwardly calm, but when he sees her face he starts to scream as if he were dying.

WHEN THEY ARE DRIVING HOME FROM THE emergency room, Kyle slumps in his seat, nearly asleep, doped up on a pain-killer. A gauze bandage, like a little white beard, covers most of his chin. Two of his bottom teeth had gone through his lip. She had nearly fainted at the sight. The doctor, a stunning Indian woman who looked like an actress playing a doctor, gave him six stitches and complimented him on being such a brave boy. Kyle wanted to know if he would have a scar and seemed disappointed when the doctor assured him that any scar would be very, very faint. Lynne pulls into her parking space and peers at her watch in the dim light. It is after ten o'clock. She carries Kyle into the building, staggering a bit under his limp weight, and manages to make it into his bedroom and set him down on his bed before collapsing. When she recovers her strength, she tugs off his sneakers and jeans, pulls the covers up over him, kisses him lightly on the forehead, flicks off the light, and tiptoes out of his room. God, she thinks, what next?

The living room, like the rest of the apartment, is a wreck. Her twice-a-month cleaning service was sacrificed, along with the beauty parlor, to pay for her therapy appointments. She kicks a fleet of Kyle's Matchbox cars into the corner, gathers up some old unread newspapers and dumps them into a basket under the coffee table, and sinks, exhausted, onto the couch. Every night after Kyle is in bed, Lynne lies on the couch, drinking and thinking. She feels terribly, terribly cheated, like a child who has waited patiently in line, not shoving or whining, only to

discover that the kid in front of her got the last cookie. For months and months she was understanding and uncomplaining, waiting for David to extricate himself from his marriage. Although Rachel had always seemed to Lynne to be an unusually strong and confident woman, David assured her that, underneath, Rachel was a quivering puddle of insecurity and that her self-esteem, her sense of herself as a woman, had been severely undermined by her inability to conceive a child. If he left abruptly, he said, Rachel would be devastated. He had to proceed slowly and gently, he said, so that she would see that their basic incompatibility had nothing to do with her infertility—although he did concede that her single-minded obsession with conception had in fact cast a pall on the marriage. The fact that Lynne had a child, he said, would be like rubbing salt in the wound. She understood, didn't she? And Lynne would nod and agree to wait just a little longer, until after Christmas or Rachel's parents' visit or David's latest article was finished, even though she wanted to cry and whine that she, too, had insecurities, *huge, gnawing* insecurities—in fact, she would bet that her insecurities could eat Rachel's insecurities for lunch—and just how long did he intend to drag this thing out? How did she know he wasn't just stringing her along? I mean, after all, she was the classic Other Woman, wasn't she? *Just have faith*, he would say, looking into her eyes. *Trust me.*

And despite herself, she did. Even though, as Eleanor continues to point out to her, she has no way of knowing that he actually would have left his wife, or that even if he had, their own relationship would have worked out, she *knows*. She knows he would have and it would have. And she doesn't want anyone trying to reason her grief away by pointing out that she had no guarantees. Deep in her gut she knows that David loved her more than any other man ever has or ever will and that they would have been happy together. Yes, *happy*, she repeats to herself defiantly, as she pictures Eleanor's dubious expression.

Lying on the couch, an empty bourbon glass loose in her hand, she nods off to sleep. She dreams that David and she are living in a playhouse in David's back yard. Their playhouse is a perfect miniaturized version of the big Victorian house in which Rachel lives. During the day David and she sleep. Their bed is suspended by chains from the ceiling, like a large swing. At night she sneaks into the big house and steals whatever they need—food, clothing, books, records, pretty trinkets. As she tiptoes around the big house during these nightly forays, her heart pounds; she is terrified. She knows that if Rachel is disturbed, in her terrible fiery wrath she—like a sleeping dragon suddenly roused from her long slumber—will reduce Lynne to a tiny, pitiful pile of ashes. This particular night, as Lynne is reaching for a silver hairbrush gleaming in the moonlight on Rachel's dresser, she clumsily knocks a bottle of perfume onto the wood floor. She freezes in terror. And then she jolts wide awake, her heart



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hammering, her neck twisted at a painful angle, shivering slightly from the cold, and gets up and stumbles down the dark hallway and climbs into bed next to her warm, sleeping son.

But she cannot fall back to sleep. It is a windy night, and she lies awake, hour after hour, listening to the wind chime in the back yard. And that's when she decides that despite what she told Eleanor, she will call Rachel in the morning and agree to list the house. As soon as she makes this decision, she relaxes and feels herself drifting off again. It is as if she has known all along that she would say yes, that she couldn't say no.

ALL THE NEXT MORNING, AS SHE IS GOING about her business, Lynne feels anxious and impatient, waiting for two o'clock, when she has arranged to meet Rachel at the house, David's house. A closing at first Commercial Federal drags on and on. first the escrow officer is late, and then he drones on in an excruciatingly slow and meticulous manner, repeating everything. "In other words," he says, and goes on to rephrase what he has just said, until Lynne has fantasies of reaching across the conference table and stuffing his loud, ugly tie in his mouth. When the closing finally ends, she has her weekly appointment to drive Marian Lawrence around, showing her two or three new listings. She happens to know, through the Rockville grapevine, that Marian has terminal cancer—breast cancer that has metastasized to her lungs—and is not expected to live long. But for some reason, ever since the recurrence of the cancer Marian has developed this passion for house-hunting. They never speak of Marian's illness, have never even acknowledged it, and yet they have become quite close in a certain odd way. Even though Lynne knows that Marian is never going to buy a house, she does not resent the hours she has spent driving her around town, showing her through dozens of houses. She figures that somehow this weekly charade calms Marian and allows her to pretend for an hour or two that she has a future like everyone else. When David died, Marian was the first and only person Lynne considered calling, confiding in—not her sister, not her friends, just Marian. But in the end she decided against it. She knew that although Marian would be understanding and sympathetic, it would break the magic spell of their outings. And so, instead, she had plucked Eleanor's name from the Yellow Pages.

Today, when Lynne drops her off at her daughter-in-law's house, Marian sits for a moment, rummaging around in her handbag, and pulls out a small, beautifully wrapped gift. "I may not be able to come next week," she says, not elaborating as people normally do. "And I wanted to give you a little something as a token of my appreciation."

Lynne thanks her, protesting that Marian really shouldn't have, and then drives off quickly, afraid she

might burst into tears, which would ruin everything. Lately she feels like a character in a soap opera, only not as well dressed. Since David died, she has not taken any interest in her appearance. Until this morning. Knowing that she was going to see Rachel, who always looks so exotic, Lynne stood in front of her full-length mirror discarding one sad, crummy-looking outfit after another, until Kyle complained that he was going to be late for school and dragged her out to the car.

"Do you like this dress?" she asked him as they backed out of the carport.

"Very nice," he said, sounding exactly like his father, engrossed in examining and critiquing the contents of his lunch box.

She took a hand off the steering wheel and reached over and covered his eyes. "What color is it?"

"Pink."

"Bzzz. Wrong answer. Try again."

He giggled and squirmed away and shouted, "Purple!"

"You peeked," she said.

"You forgot to put jelly on my sandwich." He frowned down at the plastic-wrapped sandwich.

"We were out of jelly," she said. "Sorry."

He heaved a big sigh and snapped on the radio.

"Come on, it's not the end of the world," she said, turning down the volume. "Give me a break."

"Maybe I'll go live with Dad," he said coolly, turning to look out the window. This was his new favorite ploy, which never failed to get her goat.

"Go ahead," she snapped. "Be my guest. They probably don't even have Welch's grape jelly in Nigeria."

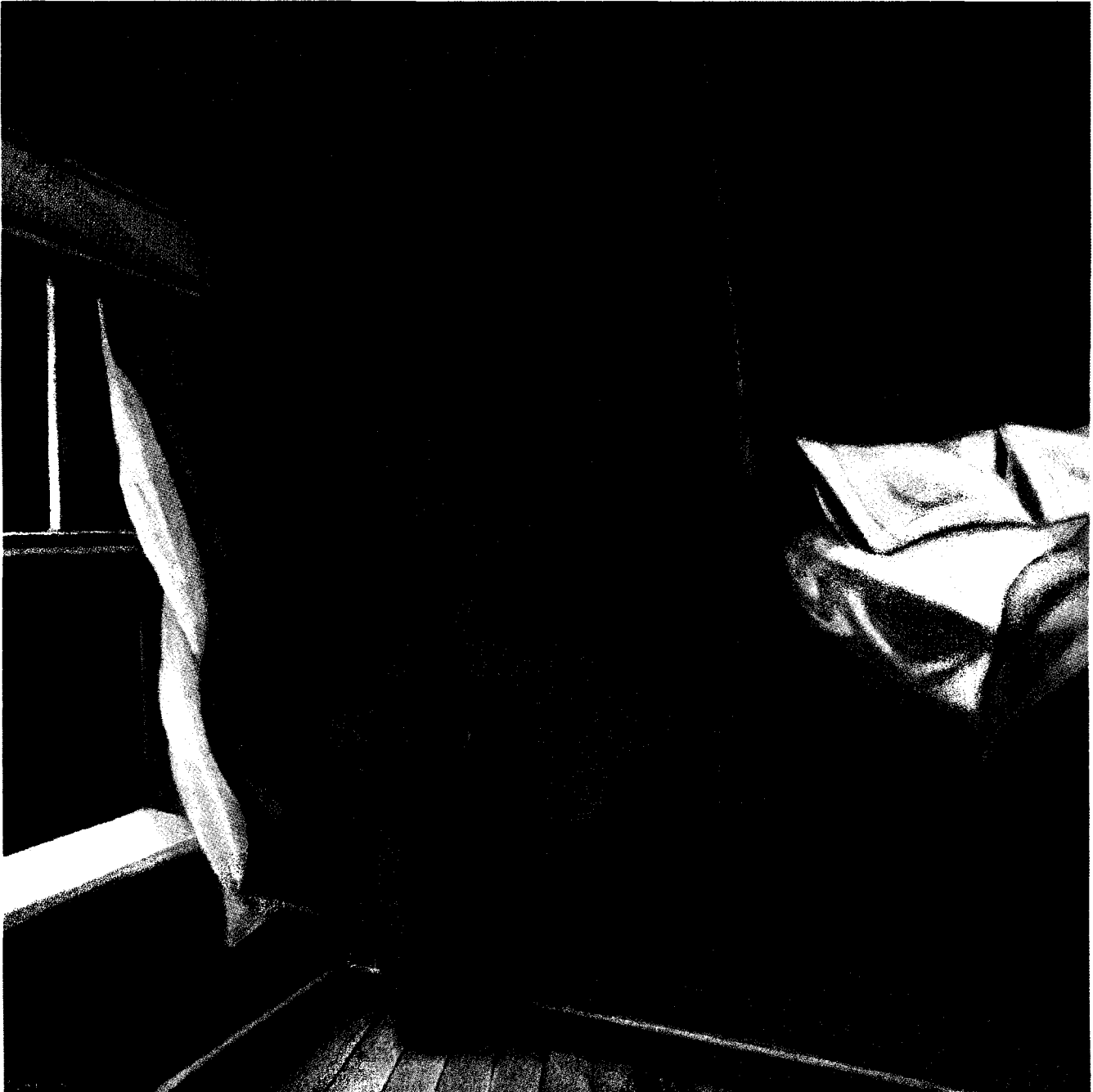
She turned the volume on the radio back up and they ignored each other for the rest of the ride. When they pulled up in front of the school, she asked him if he was sure he felt well enough to go today, after his big fall. "You can stay with Nana, you know," she told him.

"I'm okay," he said, leaning away when she leaned over to kiss him. Then, just as he was getting out of the car, he surprised her by turning around and saying, "You look pretty."

And for the first time in weeks she actually felt pretty.

But as soon as she turns the corner of D Street and sees Rachel's jazzy Karmann Ghia parked in the driveway, her self-confidence deserts her. She knows this is a bad idea. Why put herself through this? What can she possibly hope to gain by it? As she gets out of her car and walks up the cobblestone path leading to the front door, she considers turning around and driving off, but just then, as luck would have it, a dog catches sight of her and starts barking, and a second later Rachel flings open the front door and calls out a greeting, holding the rambunctious dog by his collar until Lynne is safely inside.

"This is Roscoe," Rachel says, letting go of the setter's collar. The dog makes a beeline for Lynne's crotch, sniffing at her through her thin cotton dress. Blushing, Lynne tries to push him gently but firmly away.



"He's still a puppy," Rachel apologizes, dragging the dog away from Lynne. "David was going to take him to obedience school." She sighs and motions for Lynne to take a seat on the sofa.

Shaken, Lynne sinks down into the black Italian-leather couch and holds her clipboard primly over the wet spot on her dress. David had always been inordinately fond of oral sex, more so than any of her half dozen previous lovers, and she keeps glancing nervously over at the dog as if somehow David's spirit had taken hold of the animal. She dimly remembers reading about such things during her Carlos Castaneda period, back in college.

"Would you like some iced tea or a diet Coke?" Rachel asks graciously.

"A diet Coke would be great," Lynne says.

Rachel gets up and heads toward the kitchen, her armload of silver bracelets tinkling faintly. She is wearing black stretch capri pants like the ones Lynne's mother used to wear, but somehow they look nothing like they looked on her mother. Her oversized black T-shirt and short, boyish haircut somehow manage to look ultra-feminine. Lynne suddenly feels like a leftover from Woodstock in her gauzy sundress and long straight hair. She looks over at the dog, who seems to be staring at her with a terrible yearning desire in his soft brown eyes—eyes

that actually do remind her of David's—and she remembers the sound of David's voice telling her she is beautiful. *You're beautiful*, he would say, *so, so beautiful*. Of course, usually she was naked when he said this, and it has never occurred to her until now to wonder if he liked the way she dressed. Or even cared.

The phone rings, and Lynne hears Rachel pick it up in the kitchen. While Rachel is talking, Lynne gets up and paces around the room. She has not been inside the house since shortly after Rachel and David moved in, when she stopped by to drop off a housewarming gift—a hibiscus bush, the same thing she gives to all her clients. She is both relieved and disappointed by how spare and impersonal the room seems to be. Just the usual thirtysomething decor—Persian rug, bookshelves, abstract paintings, glass coffee table, piano, two huge cacti, and a few exotic trinkets picked up on foreign junkets. No corny wedding photographs or vacation snapshots. She remembers David's telling her that they were married on a sailboat.

Rachel hurries back into the living room with Lynne's

diet Coke in a beautiful hand-blown glass, apologizing for the delay. "That was David's mother," she sighs. "She's driving me crazy."

Lynne nods and feels her heart sink. The woman who would someday have been her own mother-in-law if David's heart had not given out. Now she would never even meet her. To keep herself from sinking any deeper, she pulls out her pen and says, "Why don't you show me all the improvements you've made, and then I can go back to the office and come up with an asking price." This was called a market-value analysis, a part of the job that Lynne usually enjoyed.

In an effort to keep emotionally detached, Lynne jots down lots of little notes as she follows Rachel from the living room to the dining room to the sun-room to the kitchen and out onto the newly laid patio. "Wow. You've done wonders," Lynne marvels appreciatively. "Everything's perfect."

"David loved this house," Rachel says and sighs, sliding the glass door shut as they walk back inside. "I figured enough was enough, but he still had a million

LOCKER-ROOM CONVERSATION

There are some men my husband never sees
With their pants on, though they work at the same
University, guys from other departments.
Men, it seems, don't bother wearing towels
In the locker room. Though at his age there's often
Plenty to hide, he and his buddies have eyed
each other
For so many years, on and off the squash court,
What would be the point? In the shower they chat
About their games, about the last op-ed,
Or they gossip and tell jokes and do business.
He likes to describe this camaraderie
And I like to imagine the naked men
In their various stages of beauty and decay
Splashing, surrounded by brightly falling water—
The muscular definition of smooth youth,
The humorous pouchiness of the middle-aged,
The crisp ligaments of the old, that squashy layer
Of boy-fat under the skin at last consumed,
Their bodies like engravings you could title
"Persistence," or "Integrity,"
And sometimes even the very old,
Softened again like very old wool,
All showering in a hum of conversation.

He likes to mention some of the specimens
I would enjoy—the big-necked boy athletes,
The Indian M.D. in his fifties, graceful as Shiva.
Today he tells me someone he's never seen
Walked into the shower, a kid, near seven feet,
Black curly hair, bronze except for a bikini mark,
Blue eyes, face of an angel, body of a
Greek hero,
Thighs the circumference of my husband's waist,
Dong of a god; and conversation stopped.
Every man just soaped and rinsed himself.
Afterward, as they dressed, my husband asked
A couple of friends, —What did you think of that guy?
—What guy? they said.

—Alicia Ostriker

How to Be Religious Without Losing Your Mind



Among the well-educated the myth still circulates that religion is the preserve of the dim-witted, unlettered, and irrational, that the price of salvation is checking your mind at the Pearly Gates. Yet, from Harvard to Berkeley, and among inquisitive people generally, there's an undeniable renewal of interest in the questions traditional religion raises and seeks to answer. This fascination is largely the result of the failure of secular substitutes for religion (such as positivism, rationalism, hedonism, consumerism, technological utopianism, Freudianism, and Marxism) to give abidingly satisfying answers to the truly significant puzzles in life: evil, goodness, suffering, love, death, and the meaning of it all.

Contrary to stereotypes, this religious renaissance does not imply a retreat from working for peace, justice, and human dignity; nor does it signify a hostility to science, only an appreciation of the limits of science and technology.

We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW are spearheading today's intellectual engagement with the sacred. Among other things, we scrutinize the religious dimensions of the great events and issues of the past and present, and probe the wisdom offered not only by the Bible and Church fathers, but also by such giants as St. Francis, Aquinas, Dante, Kierkegaard, Newman, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Bonhoeffer, Barth, Niebuhr, Gandhi, Buber, Auden, Eliot, Silone, Maritain, Merton, Schumacher,

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plans. He was going to rip up the linoleum in the kitchen and put down a wood floor."

He was? Lynne thinks. *When?* She has always sort of assumed that Rachel must have suspected something was going on—not with Lynne specifically, but with someone. All that passion. How could she not sense something? But she sees now that Rachel does not have a clue. They are walking up the stairs, Lynne trailing along silently, unnerved by the thought of seeing their bedroom, which she had spent so much time trying not to picture during all those nights she slept alone, waiting for him to leave, to be with her.

But first Rachel opens the door to a pleasant little guest room done in Laura Ashley prints. "Nice," Lynne says. Next Rachel moves across the hall. "This was David's study," she says, opening the mini-blinds. In the sudden brightness Lynne's glance pounces on a photograph of Rachel in a silver-filigree frame, sitting beside the computer. A glamorous head shot, like some movie-star PR photo. And a smaller snapshot of the two of them with their arms wrapped around each other on a travel-poster-looking beach. "He was planning to remodel the attic for his study eventually," Rachel says, "but I always liked this room. Don't you?"

Lynne nods, feeling light-headed and confused. A couple of times when she had expressed alarm or doubt upon hearing about yet another major home-improvement project—asking him why he was willing to spend so much time and money on a place he would be moving out of soon—David had reassured her that the renovations were all Rachel's pet projects, something he just went along with under duress. He said that the house was Rachel's substitute baby. Lynne feels her palms start to sweat and her intestines knot up. When Rachel leads her into the remodeled bathroom, with its shiny black-porcelain and brass fixtures, she wants to slam the door shut and lock herself inside until the churning wave of nausea passes. She actually considers asking Rachel if she could use the bathroom for a moment, but Rachel is already ushering her out and down the hallway, with its tweedy industrial carpeting and track lighting, to the master bedroom.

"This was our room," Rachel says, and for the first time Lynne hears the catch in her voice and sees the dazed, slack expression of pain in her eyes as they both stand there looking around the huge, empty-seeming room. Up until now Rachel has seemed to her to be extraordinarily cool and detached, hardly the picture of a grieving widow. For the first time Lynne feels a genuine stab of guilt. She almost acts on a sudden weird urge to reach out and take Rachel's hand, but just then Rachel walks over and throws open a window. "It's stuffy in here," she says. "I've been sleeping in the guest room ever since—" The sentence hangs in the air.

It is a beautiful room. Spare and Japanese. Tranquil. Tatami mats on the bleached-wood floor, a low king-size bed with a simple gray comforter. Two exquisite wood-

block prints hanging over the bed. Lynne cannot remember ever seeing a more inviting, soothing room. Looking at the pristine lacquered dresser top, she pictures her own bedroom, with its tacky floral wallpaper and dresser top cluttered with miscellaneous junk, and she imagines, painfully, that David must have felt a sense of peaceful relief upon returning home to this room. Despite himself. Even if he did really love her. She knew this was a bad idea. She wishes she had never seen this room. But then, turning slightly, she is suddenly surprised and gratified to notice a glaring eyesore. Pointing to a boarded-up rectangle on the ceiling, she says, "Does the roof leak?"

"No." Rachel shakes her head. "David was putting in a skylight. He was doing it himself." She looks for a moment as if she might lose control; then she gets a grip on herself and walks briskly out of the room, saying, "Of course, I'll go ahead and hire someone to finish the skylight before you start bringing people through."

Lynne thinks she might faint, but she forces herself to take deep breaths and to remain on her feet through an act of sheer will. Like the time she was holding Kyle, who was just a baby, and she accidentally slammed the car door on her fingers and the pain was so intense she thought she was going to pass out on the sidewalk, but through superhuman maternal instinct she managed somehow to reach over and open the car door and deposit the baby safely on the front seat before blacking out.

"Are you all right?" Rachel asks her, turning back to look at her standing there alone in the room, staring up at the aborted skylight. Their eyes lock for a moment, and Lynne feels her pulse rev. She hovers on the edge of saying something, something to shock Rachel, something to release some of the anger she feels building inside her, anger that she now recognizes has been lurking there, undetected, all along, like radon in the basement. Even though she knows that none of this is Rachel's fault—that Rachel is, in fact, the innocent party in all this—she wants to hurt her.

"We were in love," she says. "We were having an affair." Her voice sounds shrill but bold and defiant, too loud in the empty room.

Rachel stands there looking at her with a benign, puzzled expression on her face for an instant, and then it seems to hit her. Somewhere behind the eyes. Lynne braces herself, but instead of the fiery blast of wrath from her nightmare, Rachel just says, "I thought there was someone," and turns her back on Lynne and starts down the stairs.

"He was going to leave you," Lynne shouts at her back, too carried away now to stop herself, as if an internal dam had burst and she were being dragged downriver on a flood of emotion. She runs down the stairs after Rachel. "He was going to leave you for me," she says again, only this time, as she says it, she hears her voice waver and she knows that it isn't true, it never was true, and she bursts into a humiliating flood of tears.

Why We Need A Smaller U.S. Population And How We Can Achieve It

We need a smaller population in order to halt the destruction of our environment, and to create an economy that will be **sustainable** over the very long term.

We are trying to address our steadily worsening environmental problems without coming to grips with their root cause – overpopulation.

If present immigration and fertility rates continue, our population, now over 254 million, will pass 400 million by the year 2050 -- and still be growing rapidly!

All efforts to save our environment will ultimately be futile unless we not only halt U.S. population growth, but reverse it, so that our population can eventually be stabilized at a **sustainable** level – far lower than it is today.

The Optimum U.S. Population Size

The central issue is surely this: **At what size should we seek to stabilize U.S. population?** Unless we know in what direction we should be headed, how can we possibly devise sensible policies to get us there?

The size at which our population is eventually stabilized is supremely important because of the effect of sheer numbers on such vitally important national goals as a healthy environment, and a sustainable economy.

We believe these goals can best be achieved with a U.S. population in the range of 125 to 150 million, or about its size in the 1940s. This optimum size could be reached in about three to four generations if we do two things now that are well within our grasp.

How To Get There

1. **Reduce annual immigration to about 200,000** so that it is in rough balance with emigration (out-migration). Then, immigration will no longer contribute significantly to our population growth, as it does now.

2. **Lower our fertility rate** (the average number of children per woman) from the present 2.1 to around 1.5 and maintain it at that level for several decades. We believe that non-coercive financial incentives will be necessary in order to reach that goal.

If almost all women had no more than two children, our fertility rate would drop to around 1.5, because many women remain childless by choice, or choose to have not more than one child. **We promote the ideal of the two-child maximum family as the social norm, because that is the key to lowering our fertility.**

NPG Proposes These Incentives to Motivate Parents to Have Not More Than Two Children

- Eliminate the present Federal income tax exemption for dependent children born after a specified date.
- Give a Federal income tax credit **only** to those parents who have not more than two children. Those with three or more would lose the credit entirely.
- Give a refundable tax credit (cash payment) to low income parents who are eligible for the tax credit, to the extent that the credit exceeds their tax liability.
- Give a cash bonus for voluntary sterilization to both men and women under age 35, who have already had at least one child.

Two Vastly Different Paths Lie Before Us

With the reductions in immigration and fertility we advocate, our nation could start **now** on the path toward a sustainable population of 125 to 150 million.

Without such a program, we are almost certain to continue our mindless, headlong rush toward catastrophic population levels.

If you agree that we need to work toward a smaller U.S. population, we need your support. **NPG is the only organization that calls for a smaller U.S. and world population, and for specific, realistic measures to achieve those goals.**

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Rachel disappears into the guest bathroom and reappears with a lacquered tissue dispenser. "I'm glad you told me." She hands Lynne a peach-colored tissue. "It explains a lot. And it took real courage on your part."

Lynne stops blowing her nose and looks at Rachel, wondering if she is crazy. "It wasn't courage," Lynne mumbles, abruptly appalled and ashamed by what she's done.

"Well, whatever." Rachel shrugs. She walks over and opens the front door.

"I'm sorry," Lynne mumbles, not knowing what else she can say under the circumstances. From out of nowhere the dog suddenly skitters into the foyer and leaps on her, nearly knocking her over and snuffling her between the legs. Rachel grabs his collar and Lynne hurries outside, grateful for the diversion, and the door slams shut behind her.

In the car Lynne just sits for a few moments, resting her forehead against the steering wheel, trying to collect herself. *Don't think about it now*, she tells herself. *You'll have plenty of time to think about it later*. She fishes a crumpled, dingy tissue out of her purse and dabs at her eyes and yanks a brush quickly through her hair, attempting to look normal. Then she glances at her watch and heads over to Kyle's school, relieved to see that she is not yet late; in fact, she is early. As she sits by the curb waiting for school to let out, she thinks about walking across the street to the pay phone and calling Eleanor to ask for a special appointment. But somehow she does not really feel like talking to Eleanor. Not now, maybe not ever. She knows that Eleanor is a big believer in "the handwriting on the wall." She suspects that Eleanor must think that she is a complete illiterate when it comes to reading men. Still, she knows that he did love her. She *knows* that. *Don't think about it now*, she reminds herself sternly, as Kyle bursts through the door in a swarm of other kids laden with lunch boxes and construction-paper masterpieces. She waves at him and glances at herself in the rearview mirror. She doesn't think she looks too bad, considering. But the minute Kyle climbs into the car, he looks at her suspiciously and says, "What's wrong?"

"Nothing." She attempts a cheery, reassuring smile. "Just a tiring day." She rummages in her purse and hands him a pack of Juicy Fruit. "How was *your* day? Did your stitches hurt?"

He shrugs and shakes his head, intent on unwrapping a stick of gum and cramming it into his mouth. "Let's stop at Burger King," he says, in between loud smacks.

"Okay," she agrees, too tired to argue, even though it is nowhere near dinner time and the defrosted chicken breasts from yesterday are just going to spoil.

"What happened to your dress?" He points to the damp spot over her crotch.

"A big dog slobbered on it," she says.

"Really?" He finds this hilarious and snickers, on and

off, the whole way to Burger King. His father's sick sense of humor exactly. As they pull into the parking lot, Kyle reaches underneath him and waves Marian's slightly squashed package under her nose. "What's this?" he asks. "Is it for me?"

She shakes her head. "Sorry, Charlie. It's just a little gift one of my clients gave me." She takes it from him and drops it into her purse.

Inside, they sit in a bright-orange booth, eating silently. While Kyle chomps contentedly on his hamburger, Lynne nibbles away at some french fries that she swipes from Kyle's bag over his loud, outraged protests. "Why don't you order your own?" he says, scowling, even though she knows he will never finish what he's got.

She shrugs and hands him a dollar bill. "Here. Go order me some french fries," she says, "if it kills you so much to share."

He hops up and runs to the counter. Any sort of financial transaction fascinates him these days. She has a feeling he is going to be a banker or a stockbroker when he grows up. While she is waiting for him to return, she opens her purse and takes out Marian's gift, hoping to distract herself from the awful scene at David's house. She slips off the curly pink ribbon and tears open the wrapping paper and lifts the lid off the small white box. Nestled in a bed of cotton is a silver brooch, which Lynne immediately recognizes as the one she once complimented Marian on, weeks ago. It is shaped like a large hibiscus blossom. Deeply touched by Marian's thoughtfulness, she pins it on the breast of her sundress.

As she sits there alone in the booth, squinting into the late-afternoon sun, she thinks about Marian, who knows she is dying, sorting through her belongings, making little bequests such as this, putting her affairs in order. And she thinks about David driving to the racquetball club and being carried out on a stretcher. Having absolutely no inkling as he ate his breakfast and searched for a pair of clean socks or whatever that soon he would be dead. She wonders what his last words to Rachel were. She wonders if he was thinking about her, Lynne, thinking about driving over to her house after the game ended and making love to her. He could have been thinking about it as he reached for his last shot. It was not really all that unlikely.

On the other hand, she hears Eleanor's voice butting in, *he could have been thinking about telling you it was over. You don't know. You can't ever know.*

Shut up, Lynne tells her, *leave me alone. What do you know?* She sighs and wonders what he would have done differently had he known, like Marian, that he was going to die soon. He probably thought he had all the time in the world to figure things out. She sighs again and wonders what she would have done differently had she known. She looks down at the damp spot on her lap and traces it with her fingertips. It is almost dry now, almost invisible, she is both glad and sad to see. □



FIRST ENCOUNTERS

BERTHE MORISOT AND ÉDOUARD MANET

ON DAYS SET ASIDE for copying, the galleries at the Louvre were a sea of easels, professional copyists vying for space with students. Berthe Morisot first went there, chaperoned by her mother, at age sixteen. A descendant of Fragonard's and a pupil of Corot's, she had by twenty-seven spurned marriage for a life devoted to art. That was the year—1868—that Fantin-Latour brought Édouard Manet to the Louvre to be introduced.

Morisot knew Manet by reputation—everyone did. His *Luncheon on the Grass* had been the scandal of the Salon des Refusés in 1863, and his *Olympia* was almost hooted off the wall two years later. His family came from the *haute bourgeoisie*, like hers; he was handsome, witty, nine years her senior, and married—not that that concerned her, of course. On the day of the meeting she set up her canvas in the Grande Galerie and selected a delicious Rubens nymph to copy. Others, too, could draw a nude.

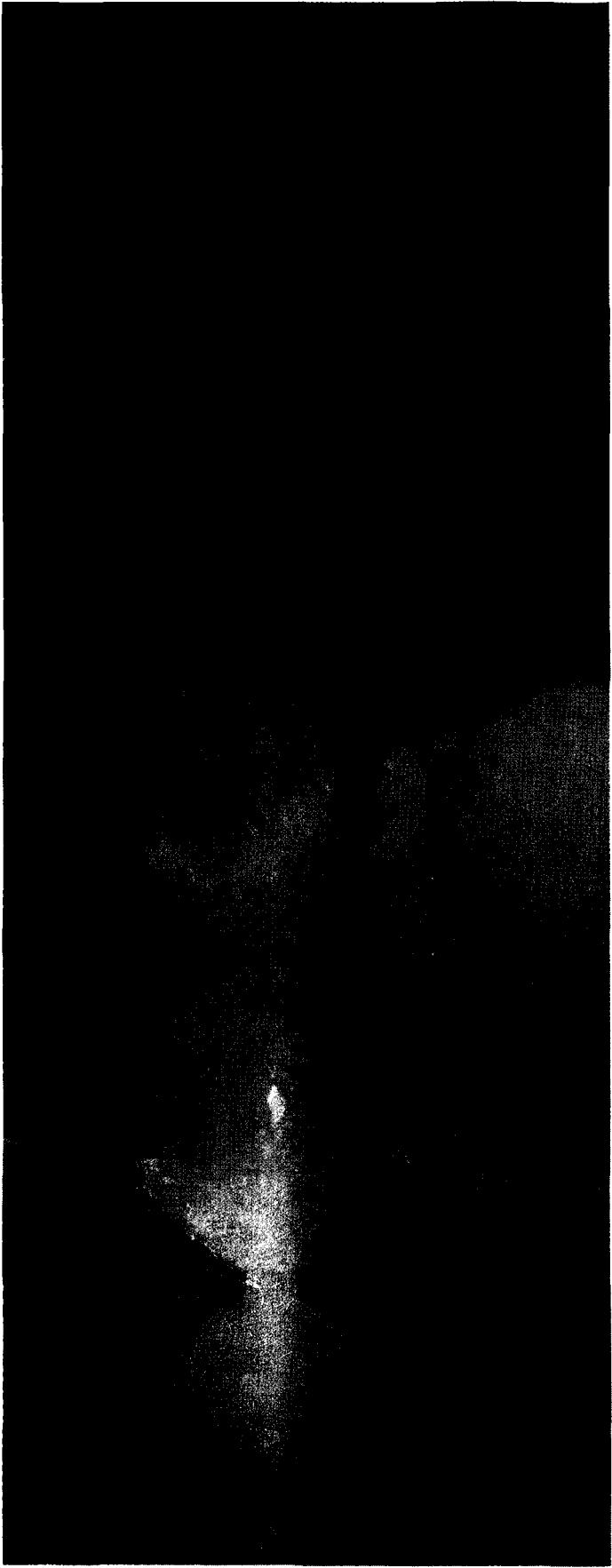
The introduction accomplished, Manet was intrigued

by the dark-eyed beauty and asked her to sit for him. She found posing a novel experience: Manet strolled about the studio and conversed charmingly as he worked. Morisot sat for twelve paintings, always clothed, always chaperoned; her eyes gaze broodingly, or invitingly, out from the frames. One can only guess at feelings unexpressed—or at how Madame Manet, a stolid Dutch lady, saw it. "He has made a portrait of his wife," Morisot's mother noted. "I think it was about time."

But the artist Morisot also challenged Manet; she curbed his obsession with style and urged him to paint outdoors. Her work, in turn, reflected his. But as her self-confidence increased, so did her originality and artistic ambition. A distancing began. Degas wooed Morisot into the first Impressionist Exhibition; Manet declined. A bond was broken. Morisot's engagement to Édouard's brother Eugène followed. Manet painted one last portrait of her: a gold band is prominent on her ring finger, and her eyes have lost their mystery.

—Nancy Caldwell Sorel





The former editor in chief of The New England Journal of Medicine fears that his profession has lost its ethical way. Doctors, he argues, are not, and should not be, businessmen, and yet financial and technological pressures are forcing more and more of them to act like businessmen, with deleterious consequences for patients and for society as a whole

WHAT MARKET VALUES ARE DOING TO MEDICINE

BY ARNOLD S. RELMAN, M.D.

FROM ITS EARLIEST ORIGINS THE PROFESSION of medicine has steadfastly held that physicians' responsibility to their patients takes precedence over their own economic interests. Thus the oath of Hippocrates enjoins physicians to serve only "for the benefit of the sick," and the oft-recited prayer attributed to Moses Maimonides, a revered physician of the twelfth century, asks God not to allow "thirst for profit" or "ambition for renown" to interfere with the physician's practice of his profession. In modern times this theme has figured prominently in many medical codes of ethics. The International Code of the World Medical Organization, for example, says that "a doctor must practice his profession uninfluenced by motives of profit." And in 1957, in its newly revised Principles of Medical Ethics, the American Medical Association declared that "the principal objective of the medical profession is to render service to humanity." It went on to say, "In the practice of medicine a physician should limit the source of his professional income to medical services actually rendered by him, or under his supervision, to his patients."

Such lofty pronouncements notwithstanding, the medical profession has never been immune to knavery and profiteering. And, particularly in the days before biomedical science began to establish a rational basis for the practice of medicine, the profession has had its share of charlatans and quacks. Still, the highest aspiration of the medical profession—sometimes honored in the breach, to be sure—has always been to serve the needs of the sick. And that has been the basis of a *de facto* contract between modern society and the profession.

What are the terms of this contract? In this country, state governments grant physicians a licensed monopoly to practice their profession and allow them considerable autonomy in setting their educational and professional standards and their working conditions. The professional education of physicians is heavily subsidized, because tuition, even in the private medical schools, does not nearly cover the costs of educating medical students. Furthermore, the information, tools, and techniques that physicians use to practice their profession are usually developed through publicly supported research. Finally, hospitals provide physicians with the facilities and personnel and often even the specialized equipment they need to treat their hospitalized patients, thus relieving doctors of many of the kinds of overhead costs that businessmen must pay. Physicians have enjoyed a privileged position in our society, virtually assuring them of high social status and a good living. They have been accorded these privileges in the expectation that they will remain competent and trustworthy and will faithfully discharge the fiduciary responsibility to patients proclaimed in their ethical codes.

The Distinctions Between Medical Practice and Commerce

NOW, IF THIS DESCRIPTION OF A CONTRACT BETWEEN society and the medical profession is even approximately correct, then clearly there are important distinctions to be made between what society has a right to expect of practicing physicians and what it expects of people in business. Both are expected to earn their living from their occupation, but the relation between physicians and patients is supposed to be quite different from that between businessmen and customers. Patients depend on their physicians to be altruistic and committed in advising them on their health-care needs and providing necessary medical services. Most patients do not have the expertise to evaluate their own need for medical care. The quality of life and sometimes life itself are at stake, and price is of relatively little importance, not only because of the unique value of the services rendered but also because patients usually do not pay out of pocket for services at the time they are received. Although most physicians are paid (usually by the government or an insurance company) for

each service they provide, the assumption is that they are acting in the best interests of patients rather than of themselves. A fact that underscores the centrality of the patient's interests is that advertising and marketing in medical practice were until very recently considered unethical.

In contrast, in a commercial market multiple providers of goods and services try to induce customers to buy. That's the whole point. Competing with one another, businesses rely heavily on marketing and advertising to generate demand for services or products, regardless of whether they are needed, because each provider's primary concern is to increase his sales and thereby maximize his income. Although commercial vendors have an obligation to produce a good product and advertise it without deception, they have no responsibility to consider the consumer's interests—to advise the consumer which product, if any, is really needed, or to worry about those who cannot afford to buy any of the vendors' products. Markets may be effective mechanisms for distributing goods and services according to consumers' desires and ability to pay, but they have no interest in consumers' needs, or in achieving universal access.

In a commercial market, consumers are expected to fend for themselves in judging what they can afford and want to buy. "*Caveat emptor*" is the rule. According to classical market theory, when well-informed consumers and competing suppliers are free to seek their own objectives, the best interests of both groups are likely to be served. Thus, in commerce, market competition is relied upon to protect the interests of consumers. This is quite different from the situation in health care, where the provider of services protects the patient's interests by acting as advocate and counselor. Unlike the independent shoppers envisioned by market theory, sick and worried patients cannot adequately look after their own interests, nor do they usually want to. Personal medical service does not come in standardized packages and in different grades for the consumer's comparison and selection. Moreover, a sick patient often does not have the option of deferring his purchase of medical care or shopping around for the best buy. A patient with seizures and severe headache who is told that he has a brain tumor requiring surgery, or a patient with intractable angina and high-grade obstruction of a coronary artery who is advised to have a coronary bypass, does not look for the "best buy" or consider whether he really needs "top-of-the-line" surgical quality. If he does not trust the judgment and competence of the first surgeon he consults, he may seek the opinion of another, but he will very shortly have to trust someone to act as his beneficent counselor, and he will surely want the best care available, regardless of how much or how little his insurance will pay the doctor.

Some skeptics have always looked askance at the physician's double role as purveyor of services and patients' advocate. They have questioned whether doctors

paid on a fee-for-service basis can really give advice to patients that is free of economic self-interest. One of the most caustic critiques of private fee-for-service medical practice was written early in this century by George Bernard Shaw, in his preface to *The Doctor's Dilemma*. It begins,

It is not the fault of our doctors that the medical service of the community, as at present provided for, is a murderous absurdity. That any sane nation, having observed that you could provide for the supply of bread by giving bakers a pecuniary interest in baking for you, should go on to give a surgeon a pecuniary interest in cutting off your leg, is enough to make one despair of political humanity. But that is precisely what we have done. And the more appalling the mutilation, the more the mutilator is paid. . . .

Scandalized voices murmur that . . . operations are necessary. They may be. It may also be necessary to hang a man or pull down a house. But we take good care not to make the hangman and the housebreaker the judges of that. If we did, no man's neck would be safe and no man's house stable.

Some contemporary defenders of fee-for-service evidently see no need to answer attacks like Shaw's. They reject the distinctions I have drawn between business and medical practice, claiming that medicine is just another market—admittedly with more imperfections than most, but a market nevertheless. They profess not to see much difference between medical care and any other important economic commodity, such as food, clothing, or housing. Such critics dismiss the notion of a *de facto* social contract in medical care. They assert that physicians and private hospitals owe nothing to society and should be free to sell or otherwise dispose of their services in any lawful manner they choose.

The Medical-Industrial Complex

UNTIL RECENTLY SUCH VIEWS HAD LITTLE influence. Most people considered medical care to be a social good, not a commodity, and physicians usually acted as if they agreed. Physicians were not impervious to economic pressures, but the pressures were relatively weak and the tradition of professionalism was relatively strong.

This situation is now rapidly changing. In the past two decades or so health care has become commercialized as never before, and professionalism in medicine seems to be giving way to entrepreneurialism. The health-care

system is now widely regarded as an industry, and medical practice as a competitive business. Let me try briefly to explain the origins and describe the scope of this transformation.

First, the past few decades have witnessed a rapid expansion of medical facilities and personnel, leading to an unprecedented degree of competition for paying patients. Our once too few and overcrowded hospitals are now too numerous and on average less than 70 percent occupied. Physicians, formerly in short supply and very busy, now abound everywhere (except in city slums and isolated rural areas), and many are not as busy as they would like to be. Professionalism among self-employed private practitioners thrives when there is more than enough to do. When there isn't, competition for patients and worry about income tend to undermine professional values and influence professional judgment. Many of today's young physicians have to worry not only about getting themselves established in practice but also about paying off the considerable debt they have accumulated in medical school. High tuition levels make new graduates feel that they have paid a lot for an education that must now begin to pay them back—handsomely. This undoubtedly influences the choice of specialty many graduates make and conditions their attitudes toward the economics of medical practice.

Along with the expansion of health care has come a great increase in specialization and technological sophistication, which has raised the price of services and made the economic rewards of medicine far greater than before. With insurance available to pay the bills, physicians have powerful economic incentives to recruit patients and provide expensive services. In an earlier and less technologically sophisticated era most physicians were generalists rather than specialists. They had mainly their time and counsel to offer, commodities that commanded only modest prices. Now a multitude of tests and procedures provide lucrative opportunities for extra income. This inevitably encourages an entrepreneurial approach to medical practice and an overuse of services.

Another major factor in the transformation of the system has been the appearance of investor-owned health-care businesses. Attracted by opportunities for profit resulting from the expansion of private and public health insurance, these new businesses (which I call the medical-industrial complex) have built and operated chains of hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, diagnostic laboratories, and many other kinds of health facilities. Recent growth has been mainly in ambulatory and home services and in

HEALTH CARE

has become commercialized as never before, and professionalism seems to be giving way to entrepreneurialism.

specialized inpatient facilities other than acute-care general hospitals, in part because most government efforts to control health-care costs and the construction of new facilities have been focused on hospitals. Nevertheless, the growth of the medical-industrial complex continues unabated. There are no reliable data, but I would guess that at least a third of all nonpublic health-care facilities are now operated by investor-owned businesses. For example, most nursing homes, private psychiatric hospitals, and free-standing therapeutic or diagnostic facilities are investor-owned. So are nearly two thirds of the so-called health-maintenance organizations, which now provide comprehensive prepaid medical care to nearly 35 million members.

Effects on Providers

THIS CORPORATIZATION OF health care, coupled with increasingly hostile and cost-conscious policies by private insurance companies and government, has had a powerful and pervasive effect on the attitudes of health-care providers—including those in the not-for-profit sector. Not-for-profit, nonpublic hospitals (“voluntary hospitals”), which constitute more than three quarters of the nonpublic acute-care general hospitals in the country, originally were philanthropic social institutions, with the primary mission of serving the health-care needs of their communities. Now, forced to compete with investor-owned hospitals and a rapidly growing number of for-profit ambulatory facilities, and struggling to maintain their economic viability in the face of sharp reductions in third-party payments, they increasingly see themselves as beleaguered businesses, and they act accordingly. Altruistic concerns are being distorted in many voluntary hospitals by a concern for the bottom line. Management decisions are now often based more on considerations of profit than on the health needs of the community. Many voluntary hospitals seek to avoid or to limit services to the poor. They actively promote their profitable services to insured patients, they advertise themselves, they establish health-related businesses, and they make deals with physicians to generate more revenue. Avoiding uninsured patients simply adds to the problems of our underserved indigent population and widens the gap in medical care between rich and poor. Promoting elective care for insured patients leads to overuse of medical services and runs up the national health-care bill.

Physicians are reacting similarly as they struggle to

maintain their income in an increasingly competitive economic climate. Like hospitals, practicing physicians have begun to use advertising, marketing, and public-relations techniques to attract more patients. Until recently most medical professional societies considered self-promotion of this kind to be unethical, but attitudes have changed, and now competition among physicians is viewed as a necessary, even beneficial, feature of the new medical marketplace.

Many financially attractive opportunities now exist for physicians to invest in health-care facilities to which they

can then refer their patients, and a growing number of doctors have become limited partners in such enterprises—for example, for-profit diagnostic laboratories and MRI centers, to which they refer their patients but over which they can exercise no professional supervision. Surgeons invest in ambulatory-surgery facilities that are owned and managed by businesses or hospitals, and in which they perform surgery on their patients. Thus they both are paid for their professional services and share in the profits resulting from the referral of their patients to a particular facility. A recent study in Florida revealed that approximately 40 percent of all physicians practicing in that state had financial interests in facilities to which they referred patients. The AMA, however, estimates that nationwide the figure is about 10 percent.

In other kinds of entrepreneurial arrangements, office-based practitioners make deals with wholesalers of prescription drugs and sell those drugs to their patients at a profit, or buy prostheses from manufacturers at reduced rates and sell them at a profit—in addition to the fees they receive for implanting the prostheses. In entering into these and similar business arrangements, physicians are trading on their patients’ trust. This is a clear violation of the traditional ethical rule against earning professional income by referring patients to others or by investing in the goods and services recommended to patients. Such arrangements create conflicts of interest that go far beyond the economic conflict of interest in the fee-for-service system, and they blur the distinction between business and the medical profession.

Not only practitioners but also physicians doing clinical research at teaching hospitals are joining the entrepreneurial trend. Manufacturers of new drugs, devices, and clinical tests are entering into financial arrangements with clinicians engaged in testing their products—and the results of those studies may have an important effect on the commercial success of the product. Clinical inves-

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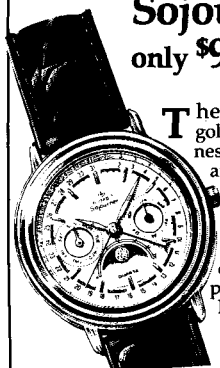
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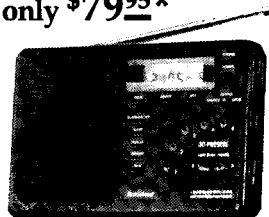
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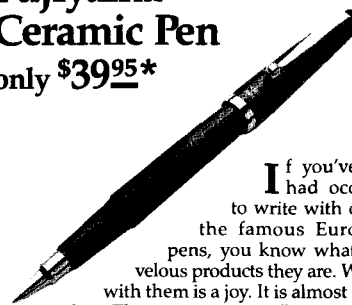
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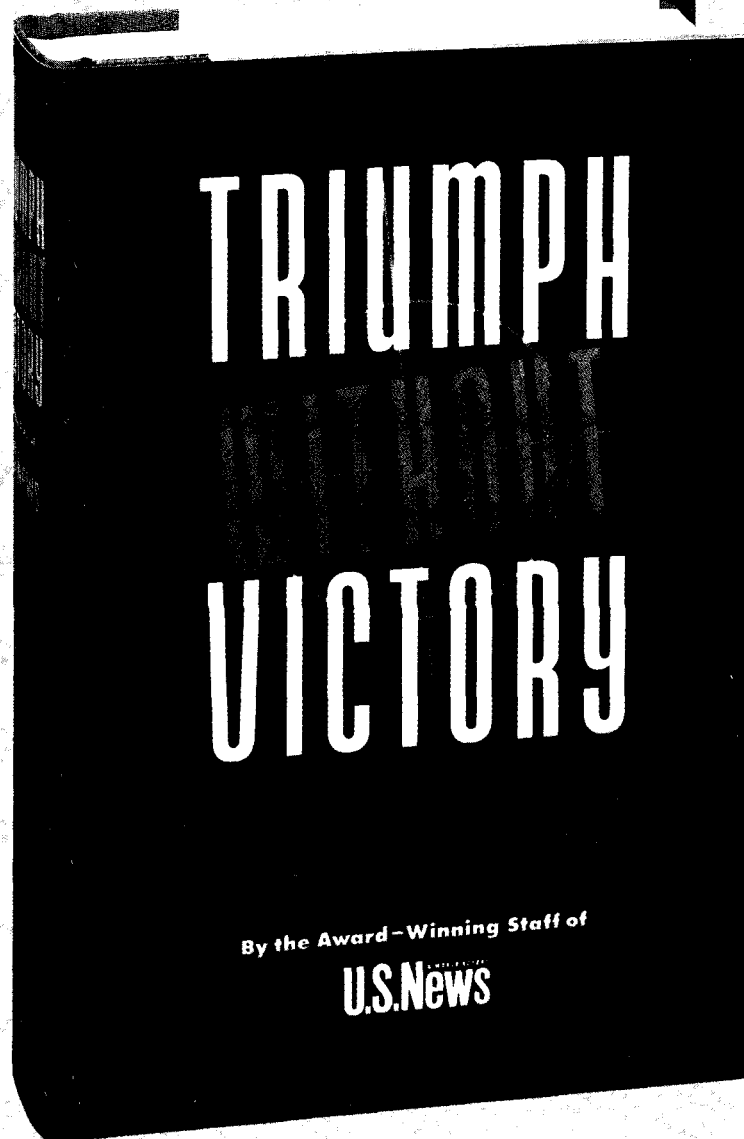
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tigators may own equity interest in the company that produces the product or may serve as paid consultants and scientific advisers, thus calling into question their ability to act as rigorously impartial evaluators. Harvard Medical School has wisely taken a stand against such arrangements, but unfortunately this obvious conflict of interest has so far been ignored, or at least tolerated, in many other institutions.

Business arrangements of this kind are also common in postgraduate education. Respected academic clinicians are frequently hired by drug firms to give lectures or write articles about the manufacturers' new products. The assumption, of course, is that these experts are expressing honest and dispassionate opinions about the relative merits of competing products, but such an assumption is strained by the realization that an expert is being handsomely paid by the manufacturer of one particular product in a market that is often highly competitive.

Similarly, drug manufacturers offer inducements to practicing physicians to attend seminars at which their products are touted, and even to institute treatment with a particular drug. In the former case the ostensible justification is furtherance of postgraduate education; in the latter it is the gathering of post-marketing information about a new drug. The embarrassing transparency of these subterfuges has recently caused pharmaceutical manufacturers to agree with the AMA that such practices should be curtailed.

In short, at every turn in the road physicians both in practice and in academic institutions are being attracted by financial arrangements that can compromise their professional independence.

Antitrust Medicine

THE COURTS HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY CONTRIBUTED to the change in atmosphere. For many years the legal and medical professions enjoyed immunity from antitrust law because it was generally believed that they were not engaged in the kind of commercial activity that the Sherman Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act were designed to regulate. In 1975 the Supreme Court ended this immunity (*Goldfarb v. Virginia State Bar*). It decided that the reach of antitrust law extended to the professions. Since then numerous legal actions have been taken against individual physicians or physicians' organizations to curb what government has perceived to be "anti-competitive" practices. Thus the courts and the Federal Trade Commission have prevented medical societies in recent years from prohibiting commercial advertising or marketing and from taking any action that might influence professional fees or legal business ventures by physicians.

Concerns about possible antitrust liability have caused the AMA to retreat from many of the anti-commercial recommendations in its 1957 code of ethics. The latest revisions

of the ethical code say that advertising is permissible so long as it is not deceptive. Investments in health-care facilities are also permissible, provided that they are allowed by law and disclosed to patients, and provided also that they do not interfere with the physician's primary duty to his or her patients. Reflecting the new economic spirit, a statement has been added that competition is "not only ethical but is encouraged." Indeed, the AMA goes even further, declaring that "ethical medical practice thrives best under free market conditions when prospective patients have adequate information and opportunity to choose freely between and among competing physicians and alternate systems of medical care." Thus an earlier forthright stand by organized medicine against the commercialization of medical practice has now been replaced by an uneasy ambivalence.

Very recently, however, the AMA seems to have reconsidered its position, at least with respect to some kinds of entrepreneurial activity. At its last meeting it adopted a resolution advising physicians not to refer patients to an outside facility in which the physician has an ownership interest—except when the facility was built in response to a demonstrated need and alternative financing for its construction was not available. It remains to be seen whether this advice will be heeded and whether the AMA will take a similar position on other commercial practices. It will also be interesting to see what response this modest stand in defense of professional ethics will elicit from the Federal Trade Commission.

The Government's Response

GOVERNMENT POLICY HAS ALSO BEEN AMBIVALENT. The Reagan and Bush Administrations have staunchly supported competition and free markets in medicine under the delusion that this is a way to limit expenditures. The White House has therefore supported the Federal Trade Commission's antitrust policies and until recently has resisted all proposals for curbing entrepreneurial initiatives in health care. But expenditures are not likely to be limited in a market lacking the restraints ordinarily imposed by cost-conscious consumers who must pay for what they want and can afford. And if the competing providers in such a market have great power to determine what is to be purchased, then their competition inevitably drives up expenditures and the total size of the market. In business, success is measured in terms of increasing sales volume and revenues—the last thing we want to see in the health-care system. Despite its preference for market mechanisms, however, the Bush Administration recently abandoned ideology and supported legislation to regulate physicians' fees and to prevent physicians from referring their Medicare patients to diagnostic laboratories in which they have a financial interest. Regulations and new legislation to provide even stricter limits on physicians' investments in

health-care facilities are currently under consideration in several states—not for ethical reasons but simply as measures to limit health-care spending. Clearly, cost control is now the highest priority in public policy.

Despite its recent willingness to intervene in limited ways to control costs generated by some of the entrepreneurial activities of physicians, the government has as yet shown little interest in interfering with the spreading commercialization of our health-care system. That should not be surprising, because private enterprise is now widely heralded as the answer to most economic problems. We hear much these days about the privatization of schools, highways, airports, jails, national parks, the postal service, and many other aspects of our society—and by this is meant not simply removal from government control but transfer to investor ownership. Business, it is said, can do a much better job of running most of these things than government, so why not turn them over to private enterprise? I do not want to debate this general proposition here, but medical care, I suggest, is in many ways uniquely unsuited to private enterprise. It is an essential social service, requiring the involvement of the community and the commitment of health-care professionals. It flourishes best in the private sector but it needs public support, and it cannot meet its responsibilities to society if it is dominated by business interests.

Why Should the Public Care?

IF GOVERNMENT IS NOT CONCERNED ABOUT THE LOSS of social and professional values in our health-care system, should the American public care? I think it must. The quality and effectiveness of our medical care depend critically on the values and the behavior of its providers. If health care is not a business, then we should encourage our physicians to stand by their traditional fiduciary obligations, and we should enable, if not require, our voluntary hospitals to honor their commitments to the community.

If most of our physicians become entrepreneurs and most of our hospitals and health-care facilities become businesses, paying patients will get more care than they need and poor patients will get less. In a commercialized system the cost of health care will continue to escalate and yet we will not be assured of getting the kind of care we really need. In such a system we will no longer be able to trust our physicians, because the bond of fiduciary responsibility will have been broken. To control costs, government will be driven to adopt increasingly stringent regulations. Ultimately health care will have to be regulated like a public utility, and much greater constraints will be placed on physicians and hospitals than are now in place or even contemplated.

Our health-care system is inequitable, inefficient, and

too expensive. It badly needs reform. The task will be arduous and the solution is far from clear, but I believe that the first step must be to gain a firm consensus on what we value in health care and what kind of a medical profession we want. The medical profession has held a privileged position in American society, based on the expectation that it will serve society's needs first of all. How can it hope to continue in that position if it loses the trust of the public? We cannot expect to solve our health-care problems unless we can count on the basic altruism of the profession and its sense of responsibility to patients and the general public welfare. American society and the medical profession need to reaffirm their *de facto* contract, because they will have to depend on each other as the United States painfully gropes its way toward a better system of health care.

Physicians have the power to make health-care reform possible. They know the system better than anyone, and if they want to, they can use its resources more prudently than they do now without any loss of medical effectiveness. It is primarily their decisions that determine what medical services will be provided in each case, and therefore what the aggregate expenditure for health care will be. If physicians remain free of conflicting economic ties, and if they act in a truly professional manner, medical facilities will probably be used more appropriately, regardless of their ownership or organization. In any case, no proposed reforms in the health-care system can ultimately be successful without a properly motivated medical profession. But if physicians continue to allow themselves to be drawn along the path of private entrepreneurship, they will increasingly be seen as self-interested businessmen and will lose many of the privileges they now enjoy as fiduciaries and trusted professionals. They will also lose the opportunity to play a constructive role in shaping the major reforms that are surely coming.

The medical profession is not likely to change its direction without help. The incentives that now encourage—indeed, in many cases require—physicians to act primarily as businessmen will have to be changed, and probably so will the configurations in which most physicians practice. In my opinion, a greater reliance on group practice and more emphasis on medical insurance that prepays providers at a fixed annual rate offer the best chance of solving the economic problems of health care, because these arrangements put physicians in the most favorable position to act as prudent advocates for their patients, rather than as entrepreneurial vendors of services. However, regardless of what structural changes in the health-care system are ultimately adopted, physicians hold the key. The sooner they join with government and the public in reaffirming the medical profession's ethical contract with society, the easier will be the task of reform and the greater the chance of its success. □

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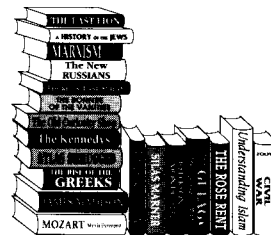
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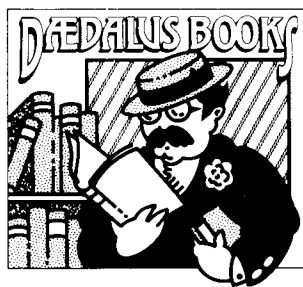
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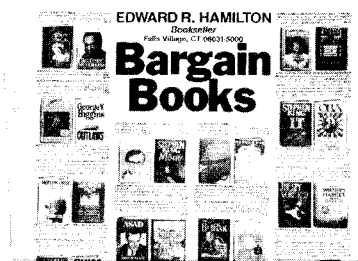
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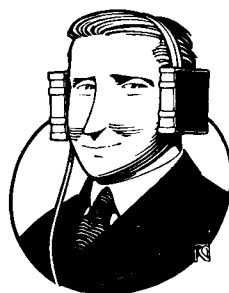
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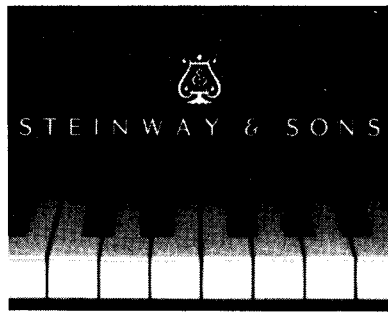
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Smiles of the Summer Light

A midsummer's sojourn in Scandinavia

by Peter Davison

THE PERFECT TIME to travel in Scandinavia turns out to be July, I discovered last summer, especially if you want to enjoy the beauties of long summer light and the spectacular scenery of northern latitudes. Danes, Norwegians, and Swedes alike take very lengthy vacations and simply skip town in July for the spacious reaches and beaches of their own countries, or for a destination farther south, like Spain. Wherever my wife and I traveled, especially in the cities, we found hotel reservations easy to get or not required, and rates for rooms, including luxurious ones, often reduced (rooms in the Grand Hotel in Oslo went for \$70 a night per person, including a gigantic Scandinavian breakfast). Our quiet hotel near the harbor in Copenhagen was delightfully uncrowded; so was our small hotel in Bergen, on the docks overlooking the spectacular harbor; and in Göteborg, had we but known it, the sumptuous Novotel, overlooking the whole city and the harbor, would have offered us special weekend and summer prices. As it was, we had a magnificent lunch there one Sunday, the only guests in the dining room. In celebration of such vacancies, perhaps, the Kristine Kyrka, a church prominently at the center of the city, bore the sign CLOSED ON SUNDAYS.

Perhaps 1991 was as exceptional in its unencumbered travel as it was in its good weather, but we used public

transport everywhere we went and never resorted to a rental car, relying instead on a three-week Scanrail Pass, available in advance for \$309 per person for first-class accommodations, usable on all trains, many boats, and some buses. The trains, especially in Norway, are comfortable indeed; the buses are state-of-the-art vehicles that bring you into close touch with the country and the campers, housewives, farmers, mailmen, and casual travelers who climb on and off, with packs and packages, mailbags and groceries, at crossroads and waysides, between which episodes the driver converses coolly with headquarters on a cellular telephone or negotiates a two-lane mountain highway—or both.

Scandinavia in July is as overwhelmed with flowers, wild and domesticated—roses, buttercups, wild delphinium, yellow and blue asters, Canterbury bells, wild geraniums in various shades, tall fireweed, foxglove, forget-me-not, giant Queen Anne's lace, daisies—as New England is in late May. The long, gleaming hours of daylight (on July 15 in Oslo the sun rises at about 4:00 A.M. and sets at 10:00 P.M.) enable you to walk the city streets till all hours or to take country strolls before breakfast and after dinner. To wake in the wee hours and get an eyeful of pearly twilight instills an otherworldly feeling. And by day the notorious Scandinavian thirst for sun-

light tempts people into continual basking, not always fully or even partly clothed. At one unscheduled stop along the Swedish North Sea coast a trainload of passengers was entertained by the sight of a zaftig backyard sunbather leaping to her feet and scurrying indoors to cover up. In the Norwegian mountains, at out-of-the-way stations, the trains exhale armies of gigantic and comely hikers, male and female, with backpacks the size of Yule logs, who vanish into the surround as quickly as their replacements are inhaled into the trains, to debark at the next wild spot where they can gallop off through the sunlight. The lakes, forests, and alpine tablelands can easily absorb millions of vacationers, but on our miles of mountain walks we only once encountered other human beings—a German family trio.

COPENHAGEN and Oslo are the most ingratiating of the cities we visited: Copenhagen for its cordiality, its varied and cosmopolitan street life, its music and dance, and its museums; Oslo for a sense of renewed vitality in a city that has long been regarded, and not by foreigners alone, as among Europe's gloomiest. The museums that dazzled us in Copenhagen include the unmatched Carlsberg Glyptotek, a handsome turn-of-the-century building containing one of the greatest classical collections in the world. Its



OPPOSITE PAGE AND LEFT: LEO DE WYS/JOACHIM MESSESRICHMIDT

At left: On the Hanseatic Wharf, Bergen, Norway. Above: A wildflower-filled meadow high in the Norwegian mountains

Greek, Roman, Egyptian, and Etruscan portrait statuary outstrips any collection I have encountered in Greece or Rome. In one room alone the cast of *I, Claudius* stands around the walls shoulder to shoulder: Augustus, Livia, Germanicus, Agrippa, Tiberius, Caligula, Messalina. The museum's upper floors are laden with unusual paintings by Gauguin and three dozen Degas bronzes. About twenty miles north of the city contemporary art teems in the brilliantly designed and ever-expanding seaside Louisiana Museum of Modern Art (the founder, Alexander Brun, had been married to three

Louises), one of the most beautifully constructed art palaces I have ever seen—its sculptures by Henry Moore, Alexander Calder, Richard Serra, and Barbara Hepworth perfectly positioned outdoors, and its paintings hung inside both above and below the varying levels of the ground. The Carlsberg Glyptotek and the Louisiana, like more and more museums in Denmark, are privately financed. For Isak Dinesen worshippers, who do not include this writer, Karen Blixen's ancestral home stands at Rungsted, only a few miles from the Louisiana and easily reachable by train or bus (and always crowd-

ed). But the more frivolous pleasures of Copenhagen reside in its good nature, as exemplified by Tivoli, the world-famous amusement park in the heart of the city, with its restaurants, rides, gardens, gambling, and public entertainments; and in the street life in Nyhavn and Ostergade, where on one corner a guitarist plays "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" and "Greensleeves," while on another a small jazz group rips into "Bill Bailey, Won't You Please Come Home?"

Breakfast in Copenhagen starts with three or four varieties of herring—or smoked salmon, cheese, eggs, smoked



The Winter Garden of the Carlsberg Glyptotek

meat, cereals, fruit, or all of the above. Scandinavian bread is excellent, widely varied, and plentiful at all meals. One wonderful dinner (salmon soufflé, roast veal with delicate vegetables, and a dish of sherbets with fresh fruit), eaten at the Kanalen restaurant, outdoors by the side of a canal in the late-evening twilight, was as satisfying as dining ever gets, not only for the quality of the meal but for the geniality of the service, all suffused with the gradual and unfinished fading of the light.

Oslo turned out to be more like what Copenhagen used to be famous as: a swinging all-night city, thronged with beautiful people. On our first evening we found ourselves in Aker Brygge, a teeming, sun-struck complex of brand-new or newly restored waterfront buildings, café after café thronged with people of all ages, watching the sun glitter on the harbor full of yachts and ferries and listening to jazz, while along the waterside walkways, crowded with strolling people, horsedrawn wagons, rickshaws, mopeds, and children in double baby carriages, a preferred form of transporting infants in Scandinavia, platoons of blonde women wandered, wearing enticing if minimal clothes and emanating a sense of gaiety and celebration. No wonder the principal recreation is people-watching. Oslo was once a city ruled by teetotalers, but now the bars stay open till four in the morning. Oslo has taken its share of the North Sea oil money and thrown a party.

At opposite ends of the city are two incomparable artistic poles: the Frogner park, which is full of hundreds

dazzle of their color that his work, drenched in light, has never shown at its best in reproduction. Vigeland's clumsy, beefy, socially optimistic work, which was supported by the state during the artist's lifetime, presents a heavy argument against *arte publica*; Munch's art, conceived in agony, loneliness, exile, and poverty, came to the state as a posthumous and unsolicited gift from the artist.

WE HAD COME to Scandinavia, however, in search of natural light, and we found it by both land and sea—along the astonishing rocky, gull-haunted, boat-besieged islands of the Skagerrak coast of Sweden, which look out over the steely North Sea, and from the decks of the small steamer *Nordfjord*, on which we embarked for a three-day journey along the seacoast northward from Bergen and eastward into the great Nord Fjord. We departed on a Friday afternoon at 3:30 for a weekend journey inside a chain of islands, with occasional glimpses of the open sea and with clouds of birds overhead or along the shore—gulls, terns, oystercatchers. The rocks became increasingly stern, severe, and clifflike as the

of massive nude sculptures by Gustav Vigeland (1869–1943), and draws tens of thousands of people; and the Edvard Munch (1863–1944) museum, which attracts smaller crowds but whose collection is alone worth traveling to Oslo to see. Its more than 300 paintings convey the humane passion of the great expressionist and prove by the indescribable vigor and

Nordfjord steamed northward into the long reaches of the illuminated night and eventually eastward into the entrance of the fjord. The steamer made unscheduled halts at various outports, in one of which the ship's passengers were subjected to a cheerful twilight mooning by two beer-drinking adolescent boys on the dock, who were doubtless sick of having pictures of their faces taken by shipboard tourists. In another we dropped off a shiny BMW and took on a load of steel rods late in the white night. By the time we woke up for breakfast, we had reached the unprepossessing town of Stryn, our destination. From there, after feeding, we climbed by bus through orchards above the fjord and up the Oldendalen valley till we approached timberline at the foot of the Briksdal glacier. We continued our ascent through the spray of a waterfall, some of the passengers having hired horse-drawn carts pulled by charming but powerful caramel-colored Norwegian ponies called *fjordings*, and others, including several of the Japanese travelers, carrying parasols. All along the banks of the fjord and on the islands lay a variety of farms, hayfields, houses, cottages, and weekend huts, many with small piers and sturdy, well-designed runabout boats. The fjord, it seems unnecessary to say, is an ancient way of life: it is from these home ports that the Norse invaders conquered much of Europe in the Dark Ages.

We had a second three-day adventure in the mountains, at the foot of Galdhøpiggen, where we stayed in the Elveneseter, a large hotel with numerous



Copenhagen's historic Nyhavn district

outbuildings, by the side of a thundering glacial stream that tumbles down from the Jotunheimen plateau. We had reached our destination from Bergen, at first by a fast boat up the Sogne Fjord, longest and most delightful of the fjords, and then by bus. We rode for several hours on a narrow winding road through a series of interesting villages, rising to a pass that crosses the lunar surfaces of the 4,000-foot-high plateau of lakes, peaks, and glaciers: a vast sweep of scenery in whose foreground sheep and reindeer grazed, sunbathers sunbathed, and tourists in bathing suits swooped in snowmobiles across summer snowfields. The Elveseter, managed by five successive generations of the same family, provides simple rooms and ample food for about \$50 per person per day, including picnic lunches for mountain walks. By night the hotel is crowded with guests who disembark from tourist buses in time for dinner and depart the next morning after breakfast, but after the buses snort off, it's a peaceful place. The mountain roads and trails that twist away and upward in all directions urged us past moss-bordered waterfalls and twisted conifers, through birch and alder groves alive with elusive mountain birds, and past the timberline to alpine fields and high meadows where cows grazed among the highest groves and ravens circled fiercely overhead, decrying our presence. Sitting in the crook of a conifer at the side of a gorge, we looked down at banks of moss, up toward a snowfield overhead, across the meadows to huts built high on Galdhøpiggen's shoulder to give serious mountaineers shelter in bad weather. We found other mountain districts to explore, some with herds of half-wild sheep wandering empty village streets or with goats scampering on the turf rooftops, but nothing equaled this—for here we realized the greatest pleasure of our travels after the light: the silence.

How different Scandinavia was from home: wherever we went, people conducted their lives quietly, even in cities full of trolley cars or harbors crowded with marine traffic. Only once, in Oslo's central café, Henrikke, did we feel as though we were in the noise-addicted United States. Something there is among the Nordics that doesn't like a noise, and we liked that—and them—very much. □

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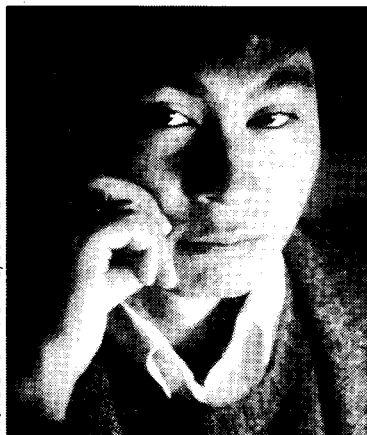
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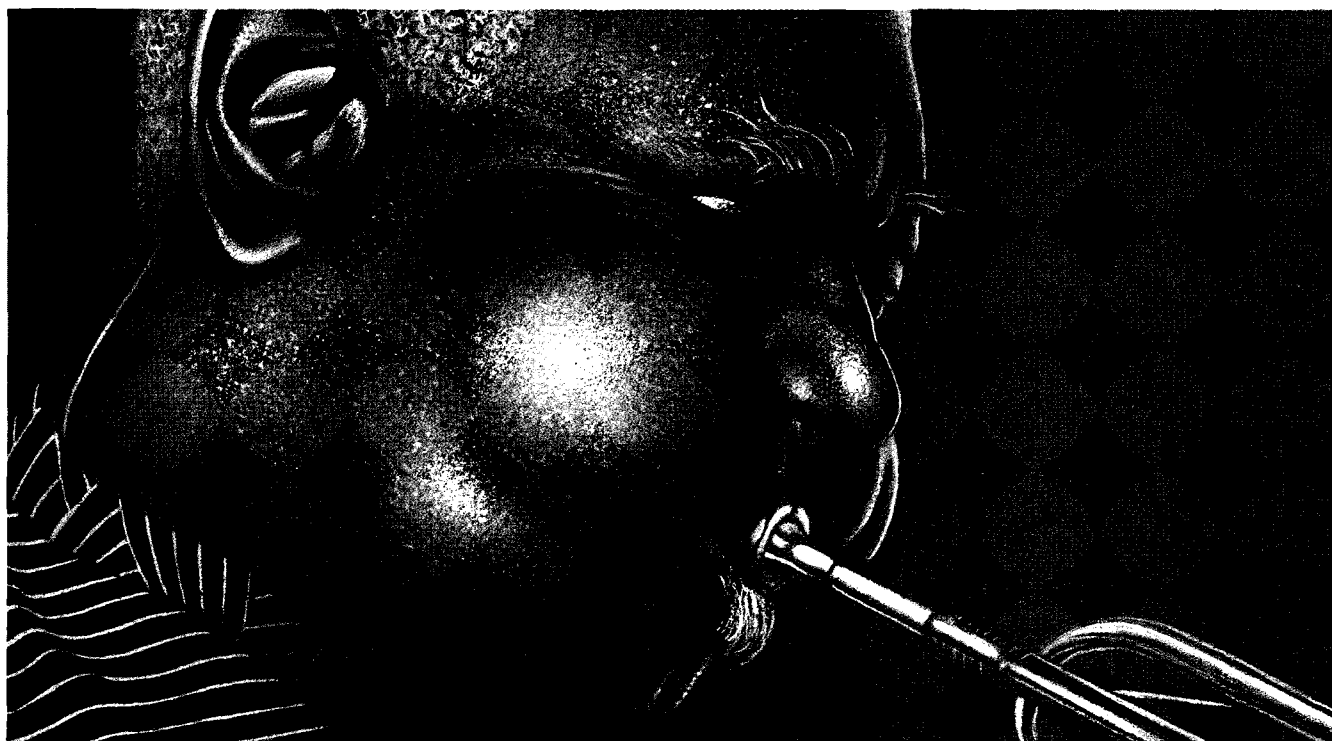
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Man With a Horn

The indefatigable Dizzy Gillespie symbolizes jazz to audiences and musicians alike

by Francis Davis

THOUGH IT'S a touch grotesque, the artist Mark Diamond's hologram of Dizzy Gillespie is life-like enough to halt you in your tracks as you hurry past the jazz club called Fat Tuesday's, on Third Avenue between 17th and 18th, in New York. Gillespie—white-haired even to the tuft under his lip and looking close to his present age of seventy-four—smiles and lifts his trumpet to his lips (it's that oddly designed horn of his, with the bell tilted up away from the tubing and valves). Then he swells his cheeks into enormous pouches and blows, his neck expanding too, before the movements reverse and he smiles again, this time as though acknowledging applause.

Gillespie follows you into Fat Tuesday's, where there is a large poster of him to the far left of the bandstand. And on a wall opposite the bandstand

at the Blue Note, a club a few blocks west and several blocks south, where I heard Gillespie perform with his quintet last year, there is a mural showing a much younger Gillespie in action with some of bebop's other progenitors, including Charlie Parker, on a similar bandstand in the 1940s.

At one point last year Gillespie seemed to be everywhere I looked. I saw him on TV with Johnny Carson, Joan Rivers, and Arsenio Hall (unlike most guests on their programs, he wasn't promoting new "product"—he was just being Dizzy Gillespie), and on the promos for "The Soul of American Music," a black music-awards show on which he appeared to be the token jazz musician. He even turned up last year in an issue of *Bon Appetit*, in which it was revealed that he once feasted on crocodile in Zaire and that the only

thing he ever cooks at home is a breakfast of salmon with grits. In New York last June, I heard him at three different shows in one week, all presented as part of the JVC Jazz Festival. One of these was a tribute to Doc Cheatham, an indefatigable trumpeter twelve years Gillespie's elder. The others were memorials for Dexter Gordon and Sarah Vaughan, both of whom died in 1990, and both of whom made their first important records with Gillespie, in the 1940s.

Gillespie, exercising a monarch's noblesse oblige, also appeared, unbilled, at "Bebop, Forty and Under," a JVC program that I missed. The reviews indicated that Gillespie, the oldest man on stage by several decades, had set the pace for the trumpeters Jon Faddis, Roy Hargrove, and Wallace Roney on three numbers that climaxed the show,

one of which was his own "A Night in Tunisia" (which he first recorded with Vaughan, in 1944, under the title "Interlude").

At the three concerts I did see, Gillespie appeared to be struggling with his intonation and reluctant to test his upper register, although he compensated by delivering savory, low-pitched blues licks behind the singers Joe Williams and Billy Eckstine at the tribute to Vaughan. Both this show and the one honoring Gordon were somber affairs, at which the mortality of the senior musicians on stage supplied an unstated theme. In contrast, the evening for Cheatham, though overlong and indifferently paced, teemed with unruly virtuosity—most of it supplied by Faddis and the trumpeters Wynton Marsalis and Ruby Braff.

Even so, whenever Gillespie mo-seyed onstage, he instantly became the center of attention, and the other musicians seemed to huddle around him, as if waiting for their cues. In the sense that this concert and the others during the week—including "Bebop, Forty and Under"—amounted to opportunities to take measure of the small gains won and the enormous losses suffered by jazz in recent years, none of them would have been complete without Gillespie's participation. At this point he symbolizes jazz to those who play it and those who listen to them.

GILLESPIE ALSO symbolizes jazz to those outside that circumscribed orbit. His name isn't included among the things that E. D. Hirsch, Jr., thinks "literate Americans know," but then again, neither is Marlon Brando's. Lacking a hit single such as "Mack the Knife" or "Hello, Dolly," Gillespie isn't universally recognized and cherished the way Louis Armstrong was, and the likelihood is that no jazz instrumentalist ever will be. Still, with the recent death of Miles Davis, Gillespie is probably the only living figure from jazz whose name—reminiscent of a time when musicians as well as ballplayers were called things like "Dizzy," "Duke," and "Pee Wee"—rings a bell for most people. Gillespie is suddenly famous again, just as he was in the late 1940s, when bebop's virtues were being debated in the mainstream press and (as a glance at Richard O. Boyer's delightful 1948 *New Yorker* profile of Gillespie reminds

us) the style was identified in the public imagination with such stereotypes as berets, goatees, dark glasses, Meer-schaum pipes, Islam, and flatted fifths—that day's equivalents of baseball caps turned backward, "fade" haircuts, sneakers, hood ornaments worn as medallions, Afrocentricism, and DJ mixes.

Bebop's image has changed over the decades, and so has Gillespie's. In his youth he was regarded first as a rebel without a cause, on account of his antics as a big-band sideman in the late thirties and early forties, and then as a rebel with one, after his musical experiments and those of Parker and a handful of others gradually coalesced into jazz's first avant-garde movement. Today bebop is accepted on faith as classic even by people unsure of whether they've ever actually heard any, and Gillespie is venerated for having been one of its chief oracles, second in importance only to Parker, who died in 1955 and is therefore a phantom to us. Although the number of people able to name even one of Gillespie's tunes might be small, millions of newspaper readers and television viewers recognize that "bent" horn and those puffed-out cheeks.

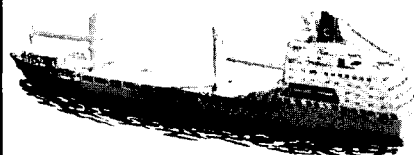
What's missing from this image of Gillespie is what's unavoidably missing from that hologram of him in the window of Fat Tuesday's—the crackle of his music. Most accounts of Gillespie's career understandably dwell on his accomplishments in the 1940s, when every note he played was accepted as history in the making. But I happen to think that he reached his zenith in the early 1960s, a period in which he wasn't so much underrated (he has never been underrated) as taken for granted amid the clamor surrounding Ornette Coleman's free jazz, Miles Davis's and John Coltrane's modes, and Horace Silver's and Art Blakey's funk. This opinion is based, of necessity, on out-of-print records, such as *Something Old, Something New*, which featured what was arguably Gillespie's finest band, with the then very young pianist Kenny Barron and the saxophonist and flutist James Moody, and *Gillespiana*, an album-length suite written by the pianist Lalo Schiffrin, Barron's predecessor in Gillespie's group. (One of several orchestral works commissioned by Gillespie around that time, in a futile attempt to beat Miles Davis and Gil Evans at their

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*RACE AND THE
SCHOOLING OF
BLACK AMERICANS*
by Claude M. Steele

At every education level, from elementary school to graduate school, something depresses black achievement, writes the author, a well-known social scientist. That something, he believes, goes beyond poverty, social isolation, or poor preparation: it is "stigma," an "endemic devaluation" that is "its own condition of life, different from class, money, culture."



*THE NEXT
NEW DEAL*
*by Phillip Longman
and Neil Howe*

Households with incomes over \$150,000 collect almost twice as much in government benefits as households with incomes under \$10,000. "Sixty years after the first New Deal," the authors write, "there is virtually no connection between the pattern of entitlement spending and any coherent public purpose." They propose a plan for reforming the social-welfare system and getting the country on track toward "a more just and productive society."

own game, *Gillespiana* has aged surprisingly well, and Gillespie still frequently plays its "Blues" section with his quintet.) Records, of course, can be misleading. But a friend of mine, who heard Gillespie in nightclubs on numerous occasions during this period, confirms my impression that Gillespie was then topping himself nightly.

Gillespie was so much the compleat trumpeter that it was difficult to say which was more impressive—his ease in unfurling lengthy and rhythmically compounded phrases or the inflections he could squeeze out of one note. His high notes whistled, and he tossed off entire choruses above the staff. His low notes, when he held them, frequently sounded the way he does when pronouncing the name of his birthplace: "Chee-roh, South Carolina," spelled "Cheraw." (Although bebop was an urban phenomenon, it's worth considering that Gillespie and Parker, its pacesetters, grew up on or near farmland.) Filled with passing chords and other harmonic brainteasers, Gillespie's solos nonetheless had a rich sarcasm about them that immunized them against excess abstraction.

In jazz as in classical music, there are two types of virtuosity: the utilitarian and the utopian. The utilitarian—that of an Oscar Peterson or a Freddie Hubbard—leaves you feeling that you've just heard a musician unsurpassed at what he does. The utopian—that of Gillespie, Parker, Armstrong, Cecil Taylor, Sonny Rollins, and Art Tatum—momentarily persuades you that human knowledge has evolved to such an extent that nothing is impossible. There was nothing that could be done on a trumpet that Gillespie in his prime could not do, and nothing imaginable either rhythmically or harmonically that he hadn't seemingly already thought of.

REVIEWERS used to scold Gillespie for wasting so much of his time onstage joking around or playing Latin percussion, in an apparent effort to save his lip. But even though less effort is now expected of Gillespie (he is in his eighth decade, after all), he continues to circle the globe as though campaigning for James Brown's title "The Hardest-Working Man in Show Business." Following JVC, for example, he spent all but a few days of July playing concerts and festivals in Eu-

rope, Asia, and the Middle East. He practically lived on the road the rest of the year, appearing in both Brazil and California in a single week in September, and, between engagements in Tokyo and San Juan, spending just a few days at home with his wife of fifty years, Lorraine, in New Jersey during the Christmas holidays.

Gillespie spoke with me from a Monterey, California, hotel room in October. I asked him if he could envision a day in the near future when he would begin to take life easier. "You can't take it easy on the trumpet," he replied. "You have to keep at it all the time." He told me that he thought his sound was now "brighter" and "better" than ever before, as a result of a new mouthpiece that he acquired early last year.

But the melancholy fact is that Gillespie's prowess has diminished to the point where hearing him attempt to swap high notes with his protégé, Jon Faddis, at the Doc Cheatham tribute was like seeing the picture of Dorian Gray side by side with the still-unblemished Dorian. Virtuosity is as much mechanical as intellectual, and age delights in robbing virtuosos of the edge they took for granted. Doc Cheatham remains a marvel at the age of eighty-six, but his style never depended on fireworks displays, even when he was younger. Gillespie's did, and he is no longer able to light up the skies with any regularity.

Gillespie still surrounds himself with excellent musicians, however, and he still has his moments. At the Blue Note, where his group included Ron Holloway, an unheralded tenor saxophonist from Baltimore whose solos achieved that remarkable combination of angularity and heft which has long been associated with Sonny Rollins, I heard Gillespie play a blues full of wry shadings and comically deployed silences. It might have been lacking in the bravura that one used to expect from Gillespie, but it was a fine solo by any other conceivable measure.

Gillespie remains a prolific recording artist, and each of the three albums released by him last year has much to recommend it. On *Bebop and Beyond Plays Dizzy Gillespie* (Blue Moon R2 79170) he joins a Bay Area group led by the saxophonist and flutist Mel Martin for a batch of tunes either written by or associated with him. He even turns in an affecting vocal: Gil Fuller's beauti-

ful "I Waited for You," a ballad that was written for and recorded by Gillespie's big band in 1946. Although the trumpet solos that catch the ear with their imagination and clean execution tend to be those of Bebop and Beyond's Warren Gale, Gillespie is clearly the catalyst on this generally spirited session. The two tracks he sits out are run-of-the-mill, latter-day West Coast bebop.

In 1990 Gillespie starred in and wrote the music for Jose A. Zorilla's *The Winter in Lisbon*, a European film that only recently found an American distributor. To judge from the synopsis that Gillespie gave me during our telephone conversation, Zorilla's movie explores the same ground that Bertrand Tavernier's *'Round Midnight* did. Gillespie plays a disgruntled black expatriate who forms a bond with a young white pianist who worships him. Apparently there's also a subplot involving the pianist's girlfriend, a gangster whose mistress she used to be, and a stolen painting.

The soundtrack was finally released last summer (Milan 73138 35600-2), and the problem with it is the problem with most soundtracks: motifs reworked *ad infinitum* in the interest of dramatic continuity just sound repetitive when extracted from their *mise-en-scène*. But what makes this soundtrack well worth hearing are the selections featuring Gillespie with the pianist Danilo Perez, the bassist George Mraz, and the drummer Grady Tate, who prod triumphant salvos from him on "San Sebastian," and elsewhere encourage from him an uncharacteristic lyricism so intimate that even the notes he flubs seem fraught with meaning.

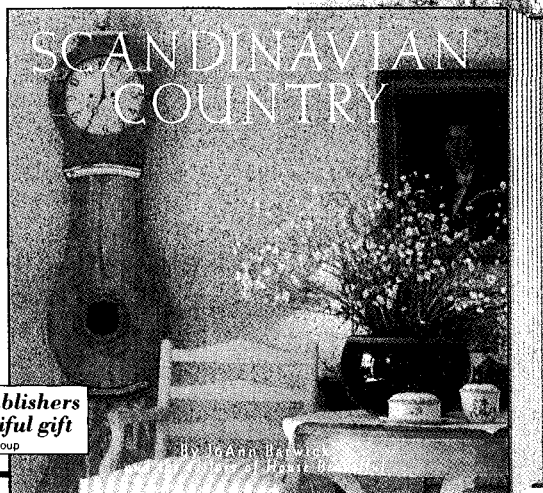
Perez, whose spacious chordal approach recalls that of Bill Evans, although his touch is more percussive, is also the pianist on *Live at the Royal Festival Hall* (Enja R2 79658), a London concert recording demonstrating the many virtues of Gillespie's United Nation Orchestra, the fifteen-member ensemble he has led part-time since 1988. The United Nation Orchestra—so named because it includes musicians from Cuba, Brazil, Panama, Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic—draws heavily on the classic tunes written (or co-written) by Gillespie which employ South American or Caribbean rhythms (his and Frank Paparelli's "A Night in Tunisia," obviously, but also

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What are the facts?

■ For years it had been one of the great policy objectives of the United States vis-à-vis the Soviet Union to allow the free emigration of its citizens. Of all the nationalities in the Soviet Union, the Jews are by far the most endangered and the most anxious to leave the country. Finally, the gates have begun to open – a little slowly at first, but then wider and wider. Under U.S. immigration laws, only a small number of these Soviet fugitives are able to come to our country. The vast majority plan on settling in Israel. And that is as it should be. Because the state of Israel has one single purpose: the ingathering of Jews, especially those that are persecuted and who are in need, from all corners of the world. And it doesn't make any difference, of course, whether they are "Europeans" or whether they come from the Arab countries, from Asia or, as now in the case of the Ethiopian Jews, whether they are black Africans.

■ So far, about 300,000 Soviet Jews have arrived in Israel. A total of about 1 million are expected within the next three years. Since the population of Israel is about 5 million, that is equivalent to the United States having to absorb about 45 million new immigrants – more than the population of the states of California and New York combined – and that within a 3-year period! And the United States is a rich country and an immensely large one. Israel is a poor country. Its per capita income is less than \$10,000 per year and more than one-half of the country's budget is dedicated to defense. And it's small: the size of the country is one-half that of San Bernardino County in California. The Soviet immigrants come virtually penniless, because

The matter of the loan guarantee has been deferred for 120 days, at the request of the President. In view of the cataclysmic events in the former Soviet Union, the need for this guarantee is now more urgent even than before. As with all other financial assistance to Israel, the funds under this guarantee will be used only within Israel's 1967 borders. No funds will be used to settle Jews in Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"). But the United States must focus on the humanitarian nature of this enterprise. It must not be "linked" and must not be conditioned upon any political issues, such as the procedural questions of the peace process, the question of settlements in the administered areas, or any other "concessions". Israel, like the United States, is a country of immigrants and a beacon of liberty and of hope. The United States should approve the \$10 billion loan guarantee to Israel – its best friend and staunchest ally in the world – and should assist, virtually without risk and expense to itself, in one of the greatest liberation movements of our times: the exodus of 1 million Soviet Jews and their orderly absorption in Israel.

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they may not take more than \$100 out of the country. There are no ready jobs, and there is no ready housing. It is a daunting and almost overwhelming task to absorb these people. It is estimated that it will ultimately cost more than \$50 billion.

■ But Israel is determined to overcome this challenge, to build the 260,000 new housing units that will be needed, to build the 12,000 new classrooms, to create the 360,000 new jobs, and to integrate the 1 million Soviet Jews into Israeli life, just as it has done with over 1 million previous immigrants. Israel and world Jewry will carry virtually all of the cost of this absorption and will create the massive additional infrastructure needed to sustain a population increase of over 20% in just two or three short years. In this fiscal year alone, more than \$6 billion or 20% of Israel's budget will go toward absorption of immigrants. The American Jewish community will have raised more than \$4 billion and has agreed to co-sign a further \$900 million guarantee to help with these costs.

■ There is one urgent matter, however, in which the assistance of the United States will be needed. Israel will ask the United States to *guarantee* (not to grant, not even to lend) \$10 billion for housing, funds that will be needed, in \$2 billion yearly installments, over a 5-year period. This is a financial transaction that is virtually without risk and at virtually no cost to the United States. In contrast to many of the developing countries, Israel has never defaulted on a loan and has never asked for "forgiveness" of any indebtedness. It has a perfect payment record. American guarantees of this \$10 billion loan are absolutely required in order to make the orderly absorption of Soviet Jews into Israel possible.

such durable items as his calypso "And Then She Stopped" and his and Chano Pozo's modified rumba "Tin Tin Deo"). By so doing, this new orchestra begs comparison to the most fabled of Gillespie's big bands, the rough-and-ready one from the late 1940s which briefly included Pozo on congas and blended bebop with mambo and elements of Afro-Cuban ritualistic music. Although hardly as innovative as that band—or as talent-laden as the one Gillespie assembled for a 1956 State Department tour and managed to keep afloat for a year or so afterward (Lee Morgan, Phil Woods, and Benny Golson all did stints in it)—this new outfit is likably volatile, thanks in large part to the trombonist Slide Hampton's gutsy arrangements.

Best of all, because the band is well stocked with such animated soloists as the trumpeters Claudio Roditi and Arturo Sandoval, the saxophonists James Moody, Mario Rivera, and Paquito D'Rivera, and the trombonist Steve Turre, who also plays conch shells, Gillespie doesn't have to be the whole show, as he sometimes does with his small band (if only to leave his audiences feeling that they've gotten their money's worth). What with showcases for Turre and D'Rivera, plus one shared by the singer Flora Purim and the percussionist Airtio Moreira, Gillespie doesn't even solo on every number. Sandoval, the band's high-note specialist, does what amounts to Gillespie's stunt work, and Moody—whose association with Gillespie dates back to the 1940s—subs for Gillespie in speeding through the celebrated break in "A Night in Tunisia." Sandoval, D'Rivera, and Moreira are one-trick ponies whose lack of subtlety works against them as leaders of their own small groups. But they sound terrific as featured attractions in Gillespie's genial musical variety show.

It's a pity that economics prevents Gillespie from touring full-time with the United Nation Orchestra. He has always displayed all the attributes associated with successful big-band leaders, including the often ignored one of showmanship. At several points in his career a big band seemed like the only format grand enough for him. It still does, if for different reasons. At this point a big band also serves the purpose of allowing him to take a well-deserved breather now and then. □

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Books

The Vogue of Childhood Misery

by Nicholas Lemann

RONALD AND Nancy Reagan both grew up in what would now be called dysfunctional families. The former President's father was an alcoholic who bounced from job to job and from town to town. The former First Lady's parents split up just after she was born, and she spent much of her childhood living with an aunt and uncle while her mother worked as a traveling actress. In terms of their attitude toward their upbringings, the Reagans are both, to revert to the psychologically aware jargon of the day, in denial.

In *Where's the Rest of Me?* (1965), the first of his two autobiographies, President Reagan describes coming upon his father passed out on the front porch of the family's house, and then muses:

But someplace along the line to each of us, I suppose, must come that first moment of accepting responsibility. If we don't accept it (and some don't), then we must just grow older without quite growing up. . . . I could feel no resentment against him.

Nancy Reagan, in her autobiography, *My Turn* (1989), takes a similar position, though in a characteristically more irascible tone than her husband's:

I've always been annoyed at the armchair psychologists who claim that I was "abandoned" by my mother. . . . Maybe our six-year separation is one reason I appreciated her so much, and why we never went through a period of estrangement.

In contrast, *A House of Secrets* (Birch Lane Press, \$18.95), the latest novel by their daughter Patti Davis, is about a woman in her thirties whose life is dominated by memories of the emotional hurts she suffered while growing up in an affluent, secure, two-parent

household. It isn't a bad book, but it is, perhaps inevitably, more interesting as a social document than as a work of art; it is part of a vast new body of work about unhappy childhood in middle-class America. The senior Reagans' views of their tough childhoods are fairly characteristic not just of their generation but of the whole run of Americana up through the mid-twentieth century. Huckleberry Finn, for example, doesn't seem especially obtuse when, after recounting that his alcoholic, oft-jailed father abducted him, took his money, removed him from school, beat him, and kept him under lock and key in a remote log hut, he reports that

it warn't long after that till I was used to being where I was, and liked it, all but the cowhide part.

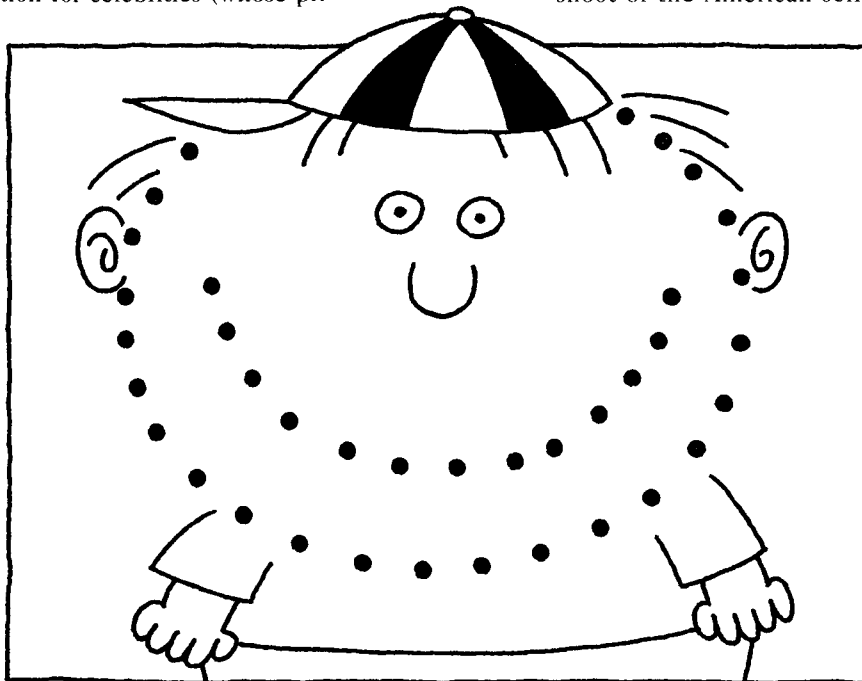
It was kind of lazy and jolly, laying off comfortable all day, smoking and fishing, and no books nor study.

Right now, though, Patti Davis, much more than her parents, exemplifies the state of American culture. Accusations of child abuse—directed particularly at divorced fathers and at the staffs of day-care centers—are much more widespread than they have ever before been. It has become a convention for celebrities (whose pri-

vate lives have always been presented in selective detail, in accordance with what the public wants them to be) to discuss the misery of their early lives.

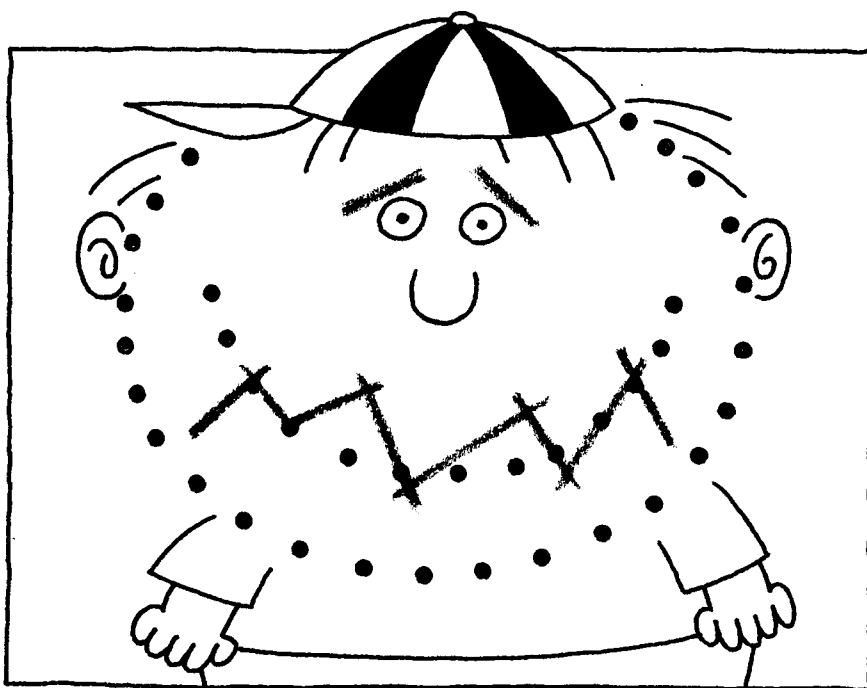
Leafing through the cover stories of a few months' worth of *People* magazine from last spring and summer, I learned that Michael Landon was "the classic unhappy child"; that the young rock star Matthew Nelson says he comes "from the granddaddy of dysfunctional families"; that Sally Field, "the bubbly little girl who was the very embodiment of American apple-pie cuteness as TV's irrepressible Gidget," was in fact "filled with self-loathing about her body image"; and that at the age of nine another former Gidget, Sandra Dee, "in a desperate attempt to gain a measure of control over her life . . . became defiantly anorexic, a condition that more than once nearly killed her." Last fall Roseanne Arnold announced—in another *People* cover story—that she had been sexually abused as a child by both her parents. Barbra Streisand, in interviews publicizing her new movie, *The Prince of Tides*, which turns on the unhappy childhood memories of the main character, several times discussed her own childhood misery.

The "recovery" movement, an offshoot of the American self-



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help tradition, has blossomed during the past decade, over which time it has shifted its main focus from recovering from alcoholism to recovering from growing up in a dysfunctional family. The movement's roots are in Alcoholics Anonymous and its companion organization, Al-Anon, for those close to alcoholics, but its real founding text is a 1983 book by Janet Geringer Woititz called *Adult Children of Alcoholics*. Millions of Americans now consider themselves to be "adult children" or "adult survivors"—of alcoholism, incest, and many other forms of long-ago trauma (a famous recovery-movement claim is that 96 percent of us had dysfunctional childhoods). The leading recovery guru, John Bradshaw, teaches people to heal their "wounded inner child." The poet Robert Bly, like Bradshaw the son of an alcoholic father, is the guru of the "men's movement," which is also built around the idea of unhappy childhood.

Another subset of the recovery movement is represented by books with titles like *Forgiving Your Parents*, *Toxic Parents*, and *Divorcing a Parent*, which, again, focus on the pain of early life. Of these, the most remarkable is *Divorcing a Parent*, by Beverly Engel, a book that seems to a reader from outside the movement roughly what the Nation of Islam seemed to the white news media when they discovered its existence in the late 1950s: incomprehensibly angry and bitter. Engel's idea is that adult children may be so severely locked in to destructive relationships

with their aging parents that formally breaking off all contact is prerequisite to their getting on with life. She describes one of her patients effecting the divorce through a letter that begins, "Dear Mr. Carter: Although you are still legally my father, from this day on I no longer consider you my father, nor do I consider myself your daughter." Even if the parent is dead, it isn't too late for a divorce: "Some of my clients . . . have conducted grave-side divorce rituals by reading a divorce decree or divorce letter aloud at a parent's grave."

At the heart of the parent-child relationship in these cases, according to Engel, is something terrible that happened years ago, but in the present the parent's continuation of the same abusive behavior (or insistence that the child only imagined it) causes the child's life to revolve completely around the bad memories and the sense of shame they generate. (One of the recovery movement's big events of last year was a four-day conference on shame, held in Las Vegas.) There is a feeling of being trapped in the worst time of one's life. As Engel describes her own condition before she divorced her mother, who is her only family, "Even though I was an adult with a successful career, loving friends, and a good relationship, inside I was still a little girl trying to please my mother. . . ." The divorce, like any other recovery-movement activity, necessarily entails some "inner child work"; Engel suggests conversing with the inner child or

writing it a letter, saying, for example, "Dear Inner Child: First of all, I want you to know that I love you very much. I also want you to know that I am working very hard on being a good mommy to you, the kind of mommy you need."

RECOVERY BOOKS already form a substantial genre. Judging by *A House of Secrets*, a subgenre is now emerging: recovery fiction. If Patti Davis is not part of the recovery movement herself, then it is remarkable that she has stumbled independently onto all its essential themes. Her broad subject is, to quote from the book jacket, "the emotional and psychological abuse that can occur within the 'best of families.'" The family she describes is the Lawtons: Clifford, the genial, absurdly optimistic father (who, despite an extremely relaxed work schedule, becomes one of the richest men in America); Rachel, his brittle, overprotective wife; and their two daughters, dutiful Lily and rebellious Carla. Rachel's goal is to maintain a front of perfect normality regarding the life of the family. Clifford and Lily function as her allies in this quest, but Carla wants to expose the not-so-pretty truth.

Much is made by Davis of the idea that the Lawtons' lives are built around the harboring of terrible secrets. In the context of commercial fiction, though, the secrets turn out to be pretty mundane—they sound quite a lot like the secrets that many families have in real life. Lily attempted suicide once as a girl. Rachel had an abortion early in her marriage, but she tells her daughters that she had a perfect child who died in infancy. The everyday life of the household is dominated by Rachel's fanatical neatness and need for control. Rachel and Carla fight constantly, and Rachel subjects Carla to what the recovery movement calls "boundary violations," such as forcing her to eat, confiscating her early attempts at writing, and insisting on watching when she goes to the bathroom.

In her early twenties Carla, obsessed with the fear that she will become an abusive mother like Rachel, has herself sterilized. During the novel's present it is ten years later, and she is living in a beach house in Malibu, writing fiction, and having an affair with a well-known writer. Because she has decided to write about her family, her mind drifts back over the course of her life and she

dredges up all her buried painful memories. During this process she lengthily berates Rachel, who is now mute and wheelchair-bound because of a stroke (the need for a "confrontation" with the abusive parent is, again, a central tenet of the recovery movement). Finally, having completed the review of her unhappy childhood, she undergoes surgery to have the sterilization reversed. She knows it is probably not possible for her to have a child.

But I'm not sure it matters anymore.

There is another child with me now. I let her run between shadows and light—wherever she feels more comfortable. I hold her hand when she needs that, and forgive her for her fears....

She still cries inside my eyes sometimes, still runs to the blackest corners of night, still searches through pools of moonlight for magic lost long ago.

But she has words now, and stories that don't need to hide.

That sounds to me like the inner child.

LAST YEAR two books attacking the recovery movement were published: *The Codependency Conspiracy*, by Dr. Stan J. Katz and Aimee E. Liu, and *The Truth About Addiction and Recovery*, by Stanton Peele and Archie Brodsky, with Mary Arnold. Both make the point that there is a big difference between being "in recovery" and having actually recovered; the movement's real goal, they say, is to draw people permanently into a subculture of support groups composed of fellow sufferers. A.A. is supposed to be a lifelong involvement, and no member is allowed to call himself a former (as opposed to recovering) alcoholic; Al-Anon and its new generation of spinoffs try to apply similar rules.

A House of Secrets does not lay this argument to rest. Carla's life is so much based on her bad memories about her mother that it's hard to picture its being based on anything else in the future. As the novel ends, Carla has broken off her romantic relationship. Her nuclear family seems likely to consist forever of just her and her inner child. Although she has a career, her vision of *la vie intellectuelle* is that it begins and ends with mining the memory banks for lodes of pain. While she was writing about her mother, her lover was work-

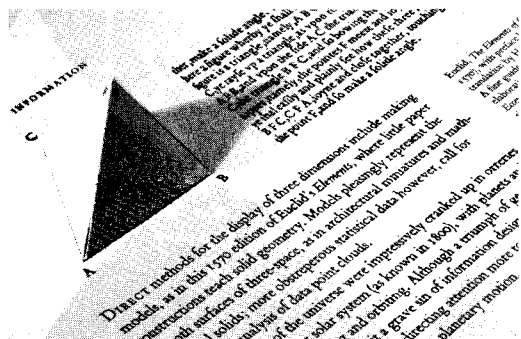
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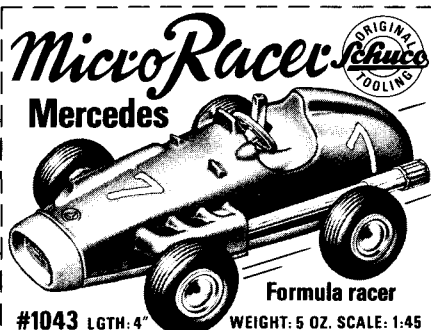


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ing on a novel based on terrible repressed events from *his* past. When a publisher accepts her first book (not the one she's working on in *A House of Secrets* but one about, she says sarcastically, "my idyllic childhood"), the thought that comes to her mind is this: "I imagined my mother seeing [copies of the book] in some bookstore, pictured her face turning to fury." Carla's literary success hardly qualifies as evidence of her ability to put her problems behind her. She is an "adult child" literally: the subject of every aspect of her adult life is her childhood.

Also, although *A House of Secrets* is written on the assumption that Carla has a high degree of psychological self-awareness (as well as honesty and courage), her understanding of her war with her mother seems incomplete. Rather than shrinking from unpleasant scenes with her mother, Carla creates them with provocative remarks or behavior she knows will set Rachel off; the relationship has an unmistakable aspect of competition as well as oppression. Several times Carla mentions with great pleasure having scored a "victory" over her mother. Usually these victories involve sex. Carla believes that her mother is threatened by Carla's womanhood, in addition to being prudish. During sexual encounters she imagines that her mother is standing in the room, watching in horror; that a man is making love to Carla, and that she is enjoying it, constitutes defeating Rachel. Another victory comes when Rachel walks in on a rare private conversation between Carla and her father, who is usually Rachel's exclusive property emotionally. Psychologically unaware as Nancy Reagan may be, she seems to be on to something that her daughter has missed when she writes, "I now believe that Patti's anger toward me stems from her unresolved feelings about her father."

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE to immerse oneself in recovery literature without being persuaded that the pain the movement's members feel is real. Still, the question that comes to mind is, Why now? What is it about the United States at the very end of the twentieth century that has made it the place where the age-old depredations visited upon children have finally come to occupy the center of a society's consciousness?

The answer from the movement it-

self is that we have undergone a world-historical awakening about child abuse. A good comparison (though I haven't seen it made in recovery literature) would be to slavery, which went on for many centuries without being considered wrong, and then society advanced to the point where its immorality became obvious and it was abolished. Beverly Engel writes,

For generations, parents have been abusing their children, and these abused children in turn often grow up to abuse their own children. Because of our increased knowledge about abusive and dysfunctional families, we are the first generation to be able to break this cycle and ensure that we do not pass on this legacy of abuse.

The movement can be historically placed in a much less grand way, too. Recovery literature is in part a revisionist history of the Baby Boom years, written by the former babies; it gets much of its oomph from the idea that the heavily propagandized family life of the 1950s was actually often nightmarish. People who were intensely conscious while they were growing up of the idea that they were the most fortunate children in the history of the world, and who generally came to maturity with very high expectations about every aspect of life, and who are raising their own children in a time of very different social mores, are looking for a way to explain the disappointment and foreboding that they feel. The period of their childhood makes a natural target. That's why the literature so often takes the form of toppling the icons of 1950s and early 1960s normalcy, such as Gidget, Ozzie and Harriet, *Bonanza*, Miss America (Marilyn Van Derbur, Miss America 1958, recently went public as a childhood incest victim)—and the Reagans.

Both books attacking the recovery movement say that its growth is tied to the deterioration of extended families and communities in American life. People now look to love, marriage, and the nuclear family to meet all their needs, and when that doesn't work, they have nothing to fall back on except support groups. The part of the movement that traffics in the concepts of adult children and "codependency" (a tendency to get into caretaking relationships with troubled people) reinforces this pattern by urging members to sever troubling

family ties. Peele and Brodsky write, "The Children of Alcoholics movement may express a shift in cultural attitudes about how willing we are to sacrifice our own interests for other people, including our family members."

These are good points as far as they go, but they don't fully explain why the deterioration of the social fabric should necessarily have led to a turning of our attention backward to unhappy childhood. It's noteworthy, first of all, that we all now agree with the fairly new idea that an unhappy childhood can ruin an entire life. Philippe Ariès, the influential French social historian, has argued that before the seventeenth century, society had no concept of childhood at all—people were thought to proceed directly from infancy (which was defined as the period of total dependence on the mother) to adulthood. Adults did not make pictures of their children, and did not elaborately mourn children who died; there were no specialized children's clothes or games. The idea of childhood is an appurtenance of modern society. (Neil

Postman, an American social critic, in his 1982 book *The Disappearance of Childhood*, ties the emergence of childhood specifically to the invention of the printing press, which made it necessary for people to be kept in a pre-adult state for years so that they could be taught to read.)

Gradually over the centuries, the child, particularly in the middle and upper classes, assumed a central role in the life of the family. At the same time, the notion of childhood as a time of innocence (especially sexual innocence) strengthened its hold, until, by the Victorian age, the industrial West saw childhood as a magical time, practically the peak of life. This century's darkened picture of childhood as a time when a lot can go wrong is substantially a result of the influence of Freud. Nonetheless, he is no hero to the recovery movement, owing to his view that adults' memories of childhood abuse shouldn't automatically be treated as fact. The movement's idea of what childhood should be has a non-Freudian exaggerated simplicity. In

Adult Children of Alcoholics, Janet Geringer Woititz wrote,

A child is very much like a puppy . . . offering and receiving love freely and easily, scampering, somewhat mischievous, playful, doing work for approval or a reward, but doing as little as possible. Most important, being *carefree*. If a child is like a puppy, you were not a child.

Lloyd deMause, in "The Evolution of Childhood," an essay that has made him a scholarly godparent of the recovery movement by presenting the history of childhood as a bleak procession of torture, neglect, rape, and other horrors, offers a similar dream of the perfect childhood, in which the assumption is that "the child knows better than the parent," and "there is no attempt at all to discipline or form 'habits.'"

To DeMause, this form of child-rearing would represent the adult's having moved beyond the old custom of using the child "as a vehicle for projection of the contents of his own unconscious"—but I wonder. The recovery movement's "inner child," to some extent, is

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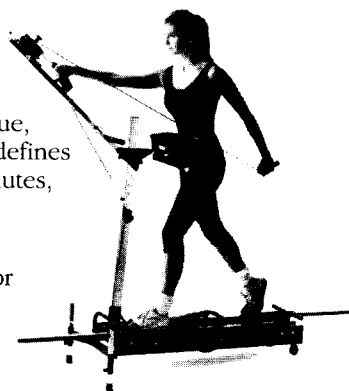
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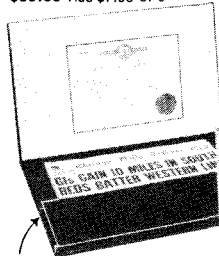
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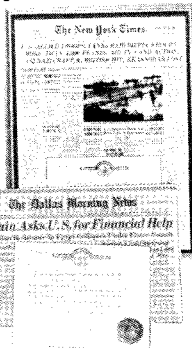
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the adult's unconscious, and the movement's vision of the ideal childhood, so much less rich and turbulent than childhood really is, seems like a projection of its members' need as adults for total, secure, approving love—in the movement's jargon, "affirmation." It is very difficult for adults to conjure up any all-encompassing notion of the state of childhood which isn't really an encoded comment on the state of their

own lives and of society generally. It's no accident that confident, expansive societies, like Victorian England and the United States during the twenty years after the Second World War, tend to see childhood as happy. That we now appear to see it as unhappy, or at the very least fragile and imperiled, may reveal something about the condition we think the country is in, as well as about the lives of our children. □

Brief Reviews



THE COVENANT OF THE WILD by Stephen Budiansky. *Morrow, \$18.00.* Mr. Budiansky argues that it is anthropocentric arrogance to credit our remote ancestors with the deliberate domestication of animals, maintaining instead that dogs, pigs, cattle, and the like domesticated themselves, because association with human beings offered a better life than did an independent wild state. He makes a persuasive case for this view, with evidence drawn from archaeology and anthropology and biology and Darwin's principle of the survival of the fittest. One of his more intriguing examples of profitable—to the animal—symbiosis is the house mouse. It has never been accepted as a domestic animal, but there it is in our midst, protected from predators, malnutrition, and bad weather in buildings from which the human owners have never succeeded in evicting it. To catch such a mouse in a "humane" trap and return it to the woods "where it belongs" is about like dropping an Inuit into the Sahara, for the house mouse has long since lost the skills necessary to a successful wood mouse and will either starve or be eaten. The mouse is typical of those creatures that chose—not consciously, of course—domestication. They have evolved into creatures very different from any surviving wild relatives and are incapable of maintaining themselves without human support. They have made us responsible for them, which the author considers a brilliant evolutionary strategy and one over which humanity had no control.

Mr. Budiansky has a high regard for animals and a very low regard for those fanatics who would restore to domestic beasts the supposed freedom that their ancestors elected to abandon thousands of years ago. His book will infuriate animal-rights enthusiasts, which is precisely what this sensible, well-informed author intends to do, on the chance that he will also lead less bigoted readers to think.

A LANDING ON THE SUN by Michael Frayn. *Viking, \$21.00.* Mr. Frayn's novel concerns a methodical British civil servant who is jolted out of his glum routine when he is ordered to investigate the death of another civil servant who fell out of a window fifteen years earlier. Somebody upstairs has raised questions of espionage. Starting with little more than intuition, the amateur snooper tracks down evidence of a bizarre government project conducted by an equally bizarre couple—a quietly daffy bureaucrat and a garrulous lady don from Oxford. Much of this oddly constructed tale consists of a needling of both the civil service and academic philosophizing, in a style deadpan to the verge of paralysis. It cannot be considered a comic novel, but it is hard to find another genre for it.

VOX by Nicholson Baker. *Random House, \$15.00.* This short novel consists of the erotic fantasies that a man and a woman who have never met and who do not know each other's names exchange over long-distance telephone. It may

please readers who find their own erotic fantasies inadequate.

GERTRUDE AND ALICE by *Diane Souhami*. *HarperSanFrancisco*, \$26.00. Much has been written about Gertrude Stein, less about Alice Toklas. Ms. Souhami has made an adroit synthesis of available information about the pair, their lesbian partnership, their friendships, their activities in two world wars, Gertrude's influence as author, critic, and art collector, and Alice's activities as manager and publicist. The author makes good use of anecdote and quotation. Altogether, this is a usefully compact introduction to two remarkable women.

THE WAR OF DON EMMANUEL'S NETHER PARTS by *Louis de Bernières*. *Morrow*, \$25.00. All the evils of contemporary Latin America have been crammed into one imaginary country by Mr. de Bernières, along with the wilder elements of the magic realism school. The reader is bounced from realistic and blood-chilling brutality to sexual burlesque to political comedy to practical social analysis to helpful ghosts and an army of supernatural cats. The underlying idea seems to be that the only hope for Latin America is a totally new start in an unlikely utopia, which is hardly a probable event, but if the novel's conclusion is vague and its elements disjointed, each of those elements is individually well handled. The scattershot effect makes for some interesting reading.

THE TRIAL OF MADAME CAILLAUX by *Edward Berenson*. *University of California*, \$25.00. In March of 1914 the officially respectable wife of a raffish and controversial politician visited the offices of *Le Figaro* with a newly purchased pistol concealed in her muff and shot the editor dead. That editor, Gaston Calmette, had been conducting against her husband a campaign of vilification aimed at Caillaux's personal morals rather than his radical political policies. Madame claimed that she had killed on an uncontrollable impulse, which would have made the act a crime of passion—something to which French juries of the time were decidedly sympathetic. The authorities, and Caillaux's many enemies, claimed it was the coldly premeditated murder of a political enemy. The press went wild, pro and con, and was still devoting

front pages to the Caillaux trial on the eve of the outbreak of the First World War. Professor Berenson has used this case to explore and explain the bourgeois sexual standards of the Belle Epoque, along with, among other things, the cult of the duel, male fear of female demands for enhanced civil rights, conservative alarm over appeals for tax reform, and the history of French newspapers. It is a rich and heady brew of topics that the author has assembled, and he serves it well.

STOLEN CONTINENTS by *Ronald Wright*. *Houghton Mifflin/Peter Davison*, \$22.95. The subtitle of Mr. Wright's well-written history is "The Americas Through Indian Eyes Since 1492." The author has located a great deal of information and testimony from Native Americans who experienced the disastrous collision with Europeans, and while some of it is predictable, much is seldom mentioned, much less detailed, in standard textbooks. In describing Indian societies from the Aztec to the Mohawk, Mr. Wright concentrates on their merits and accomplishments. He quotes eloquent leaders and describes the successes of war chiefs and speculates on how well the white invaders would have fared without invisible allies like smallpox and plague. He succeeds, in short, in plausibly maintaining a non-European viewpoint throughout his unusual and fascinating work.

A ROUGH-SHOOTING DOG by *Charles Fergus Lyons & Burford*, \$18.95. Choosing a puppy is always a pig-in-a-poke gamble, because even the best kennels and the most impressive bloodlines sometimes produce a dud. Mr. Fergus was lucky. His springer spaniel proved to be all a spaniel should be—intelligent, energetic, merry, cooperative, and affectionate. He describes the training of his fine dog and the pleasures of working with her through brush and bog and open fields, and those pleasures are not limited to shooting birds. The beauties of weather and scenery are as important as the bags, and those beauties are described with almost lyrical appreciation. Mr. Fergus is the right kind of hunter, respectful of the game and generous toward the world. (Of course, he does not tell any but close friends where the best coverts are.)

—Phoebe-Lou Adams



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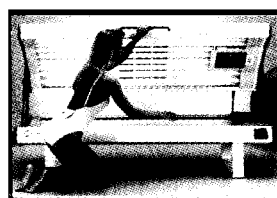
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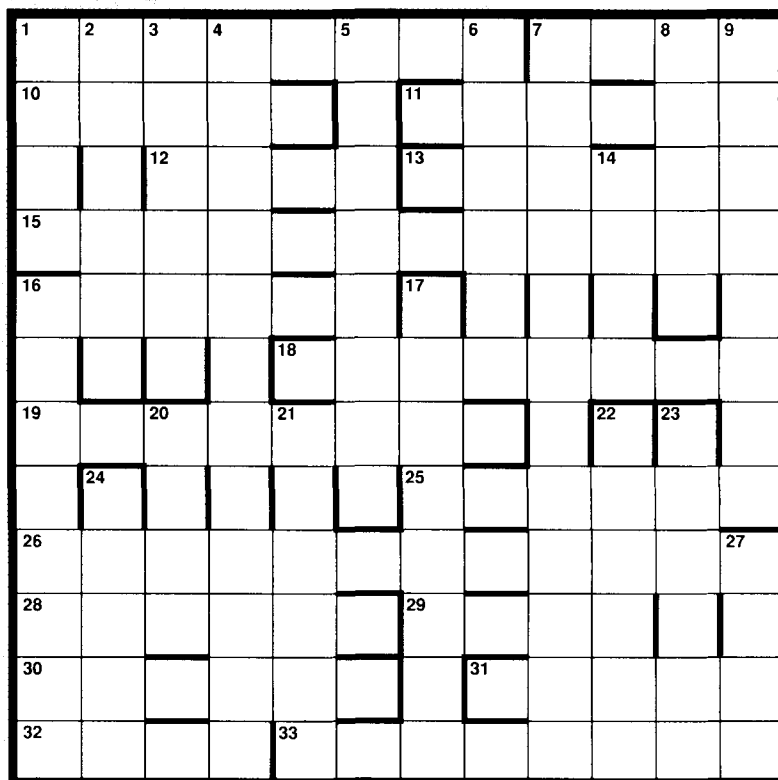
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BY EMILY COX AND HENRY RATHVON

BORROWERS AND LENDERS

Each diagram entry borrows one letter from its clue or lends one letter to its clue. For example, if an answer were STEW and its clue were "Wild West dish" (anagram), the answer might borrow an S from its clue (leaving the clue to read "Wild wet dish"), with the diagram entry becoming S STEW, STSEW, STESW, or STEWS. Or STEW might lend an E to its clue (making the clue read "Wield West dish"), with the diagram entry becoming STW. Half the diagram entries (18) are borrowers and half are lenders. Clue answers include three proper nouns.

The solution to last month's Puzzler appears on page 117.



ACROSS

1. After 100, irrational addition sign
7. Loesser musical's beginning in Oregon
10. Note pretty Dotty Hoyle embracing male
11. Nuts mar clear candy
12. Middle of bench has mild crack
13. Spilled teas covering tie, say
15. Amid check for mortar
16. Hero's mean, lean German article
18. Almost naked, niece gets tavern job
19. On piles, lose letter
25. Head of France relaxes in zoos
26. Scattered, partial insect bites
28. Bring, for example, whale back to one river
29. Desert was wet, strangely
30. Plead about wanderer's wise expression
31. Singe most of sofa
32. Said song is grating when rendered backwards by error
33. *Tres grotesque*, Charles
5. "Slim-O-Tram" exercises for people who never diet
6. Greek character interrupts gangster's gun sale
7. State criminal weirdly given to smothering
8. New Jersey basketball players' cars
9. Salt fed to Communist's sows
14. Sick madmen improve
16. Ape lord shot at
17. Fiend's secret writing about weapon recoiling
20. Bone, for one, held by osteopath
21. Rascal on train makes dive
22. Copper cried out
23. Remit half of debt on organ
24. Scottish lad's low resistance
27. Aboard ship, villain doodles

DOWN

1. Heard task is hot in middle
2. Maine environment can produce a cone
3. Sort of aid for a woman's heart in love
4. Family fat kept secret

NOTE: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, send an addressed, stamped envelope to The Atlantic Puzzler, 745 Boylston Street, Boston, Mass. 02116.

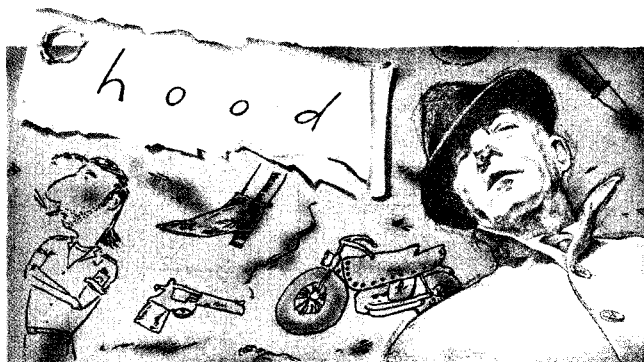
WORD HISTORIES

Etymologies derived from the files of the Dictionary of American Regional English

BY CRAIG M. CARVER

hood

Last spring, following the publication of her unauthorized biography of Nancy Reagan, which alleged that Nancy Reagan and Frank Sinatra had been romantically involved, Kitty Kelley reported that she had received threatening telephone messages from "a minor hood." Hood is short for *hoodlum* (thug, mobster), which first appeared in the San Francisco press around 1870. So rapidly did the term catch on ("Surely he is far enough away here in this hideous wild of swamp, to escape the bullying of the San Francisco 'hoodlums'"—*Cincinnati Commercial*, 1871) that



even at the time its origin could not be traced. One version, from 1877, had a San Francisco journalist writing an unflattering article about the leader of a gang of street toughs, whose name was Muldoon. For fear of reprisal the

journalist disguised the leader's name by spelling it backward: *noodlum*. The typesetter mistook the handwritten *n* for an *h*, and the word was born. An equally imaginative version appeared that same year in the *Los Angeles Express*, which as-

serted that *hoodlum* derived from "Huddle 'em, Huddle 'em!"—the title of an earlier article in the *San Francisco Times*, which repeated the warning cry of its subject: "a gang of bad boys from 14 to 19 years of age" who "associated for the purpose of stealing." Another, less plausible explanation links *hoodlum* to the Bavarian dialect *hodalum*, a variant of *huddellump* (a ragged beggar, a ragamuffin). *Hoodlum* had existed for a half century before the abbreviated form *hood* became a word in its own right ("None of those St. Louie hoods are going to cut in here, see?"—*American Mercury*, 1930).

flummery

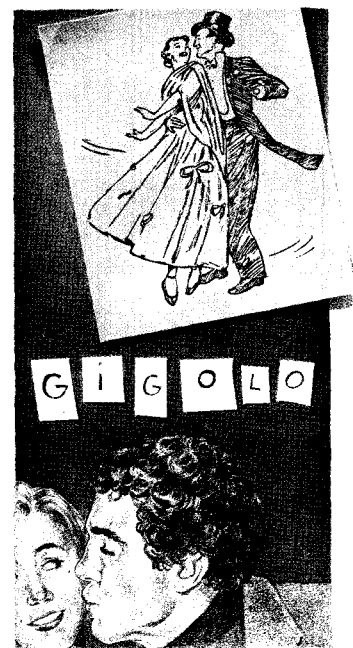
In a *New York Times* column last October about the Senate Judiciary Committee's hearings on the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court, Anthony Lewis called Senator Arlen Specter's pronouncements during the proceedings "flummery." *Flummery* (foolish or deceptive talk, nonsense, humbug) is from the Welsh

llymru, the name of a Gaelic dish that was made by soaking oatmeal in water for three or four days until the water became sour and starchy. It was then separated from the oats and boiled until a gelatinous mess formed. Its Welsh name derived from *llym* (sharp, severe), which gave *llymrig* (crude, raw, harsh), *llymwus* (of a sharp quality), and finally *llymru*. The English adopted the name in the early seventeenth century and anglicized the difficult Welsh pronunciation *ll-*, which has no exact equivalent in English, by spelling it *fl-* or sometimes *thl-* ("The poore eat Rice sometimes, but most commonly Roots . . . and Fraize [a kind of pancake] like to our *Thlumery*"—Sir Thomas Herbert, *A Relation of Some Yeares Travaille*, 1634). By the next century *flummery* had been extended to refer to starchy sweet dishes and had developed its figurative meaning, "flattery, nonsense," much the way *pap* (soft, pulpy food for infants or invalids), *tripe* (the stomach walls of a cow or ox used as food), and *balderdash* (an odd mixture of drinks, such as beer and milk) developed their figurative meanings.



gigolo

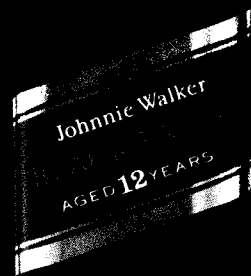
Did Jeffrey Masson, the former projects director of the Freud Archives, really call himself "an intellectual *gigolo*," as Janet Malcolm claimed in a 1983 *New Yorker* profile? Did Malcolm fabricate that and other quotations? As of this writing Masson's \$10 million lawsuit against Malcolm and her publishers is still in the courts. But what of the word *gigolo* itself (a man paid by a woman to be her dancing partner, escort, or lover)? The earliest known printed appearance of the word in English is in the November, 1922, issue of *Woman's Home Companion*. Though it entered English quite late, *gigolo* is derived from a prehistoric Germanic root. One authority suggests that it is a reduplication of the root **ga* (to go), itself from the Indo-European **gwa* (to come, go, proceed). This "coming/going" probably referred to any rapid back-and-forth movement, and came to apply to the movement of a bow across the strings of a musical instrument, whence the Old High German *giga* (fiddle). The French then borrowed the Germanic word, altering it



to *gigue* (fiddle). Because fiddle music naturally makes for dancing, the Middle French derivative *giguer* (to dance, gambol about, frolic) came into being, and was the origin of the English *jig*. From *giguer* came the word for a girl who dances, *gigolette*, which acquired the secondary meaning "prostitute," as did the variant *gigole*. *Gigolo* is the masculine version of *gigole*.



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